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THE
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EDITED BY
WILLIAM MACDONALD

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VOL. ONE

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Benvenuto Cellini.

L'Inferno, Florence.

Palazzo Vecchio.

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N.Y. & N.J., I. P. N. & C.

1903



THE LIFE OF
BENVENUTO
CELLINI

WRITTEN
BY HIMSELF



TRANSLATED OUT OF THE ITALIAN
WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY
ANNE MACDONELL

VOL. ONE



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All the above are reproduced from photographs by Alinari of Florence.

EDITOR'S FOREWORD

THE Autobiography constitutes a unique variety or sub-department of literature, which is at once sharply self-defined and yet very generally confused with something essentially different. Thus to the Librarian it is Biography, and nothing more; and beside the ruck of these (usually) lifeless and distinctionless things he places it on his shelves. Yet a moment's reflection might discover that a whole world of internal difference lies between the works thus crudely set cheek by jowl. Taking them both at their best, the very least we can say is that the Autobiography differs from the Biography as the square of a quantity differs from the quantity itself. A great literary autobiography, for instance—say of Richter or Renan, of Goethe, or of Gibbon—is not only a work by an acknowledged master of writing and a great spirit, and *therefore* fascinating or important; but it is also a work in which, for once, that great spirit has actually chosen itself for its own subject-matter, the topic on which it has elected to discourse and to inform us. A great step away from mere Biography this! and much follows that was unforeseen. For besides the avowed intention to recount or to reveal, there is always the inestimable something more—*the manner of doing it*—which was not, nor could be, in the bond. Even the most self-conscious and posing of men cannot quite stand at the back of his own head, or watch the frontiers of his personality while he holds you in talk; so that the reader always sees something more than what was shown him. It is this inevitable *surplusage* of veracity and self-portraiture—this extra treasure dropped, as it were, by accident in the deliberate act of bestowing—that gives to Autobiography its full-charged character and animation. For this reason, and for others, it is scarcely

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possible to measure the distance which separates any conceivable "Life of Cellini," such as the most veracious of biographers might have written, from Cellini's Memoirs "*Written by Himself*"; or the distance that separates any conceivable "Life of Rousseau" from Rousseau's *Confessions* as he actually wrote them. A difference in *quality* so great—in psychological power and potential—ought to be generally recognised as constituting a valid difference in *kind*.

An Autobiography, if it have the intrinsic merits of its kind at all, can hardly fail to attain some rank as literature, and seldom, in fact, goes quite out of date. The passage of time more often adds to than diminishes its vitality and its value. For beginning as an individual's cramped or anxious attempt at self-explication, it may come from his hands a large and free revelation of humanity, and so continues to be a perpetual source of refreshment, curiosity, discovery, delight, to long generations of readers. It takes rank as a literary landmark and touchstone; is an interpreter's key to the psychology of its age, not less than to that of its author; and so in the end is an always-authoritative point of reference for the historian, and for the student of literature and ideas. Yet it retains through all, for its latest as for its earliest readers, its initial character of intimacy and attractiveness, becoming historical and monumental without ceasing to be personal and human; and perhaps telling a plainer tale to us to-day than it told to the generation that read it first, or even to him who wrote it.

There is no need, then, of Editorial Explanations to secure its share of public interest for the New Series. Should the Series fail to secure a flattering share of public favour also, there will be some need for an Editorial Apology. For we shall have managed badly if, with such opportunities of being charming, instructive, or notorious, we fail to please.

W. M.

LONDON, May 1903.

INTRODUCTION

THERE are diverse motives for autobiography, but Cellini's was that which most certainly leads to success. Yet it was not all conscious, and is vaguely, if at all, shadowed forth in the opening lines of his Memoirs, which might lead readers to suppose he wrote mainly to record his gratitude for perils safely passed ; and very partially in those scattered passages, where he declares the task he has set himself to be the relation of his professional career. With him motive and qualification are one—a supreme interest in himself. If a writer use his own story as a peg on which to hang the history of his time, or of the movements in which he is interested, it is a thousand chances to one but his book is third-rate. Cellini never ran that risk. He is always frankly in the foreground of his pictures of the world. Contemporary dramas where he plays no part are never put on his stage.

But this general consistency of theme does not all explain his particular success. The immediate driving impulse to expression counts for much in the vividness of his narrative. Such impulses may range from the sublime to the infinitely little ; yet perhaps there is none more effective than a grievance. Now Benvenuto had not one but a thousand grievances. Not that he wrote in a plaintive minor key. Far from it. But life to him had been a long series of battles in which he had invariably been in the right ; and those

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who had done him the monstrous injustice of criticism or opposition had mostly had reason to be sorry for their offence. His tale is, therefore, a triumphant hero's march through a hostile country, ambuscades and assaults at every stage, but everywhere the enemy left smarting behind. The beginning of a first version of the Memoirs was inspired, he tells us in the *Trattati*, by Duke Cosimo's ill-treatment of him. Those pages he tore up ; but in the *Vita*, as we know it, if he dwelt less particularly on his wrongs at the Ducal Court of Florence—though of a surety these were not neglected—he had the more space left to disclose the machinations of his enemies elsewhere, and thus to show himself the conqueror in a hundred fights.

To be in the right was a passionate need of his existence. His famous narrative of the casting of the Perseus contains a very significant story. Duke Cosimo, like many other persons, was sceptical about the success of the statue if carried out on Cellini's model and according to Cellini's plan. The sculptor swore he knew his business : that the figure would turn out to perfection from the Medusa's head downwards as far as the hero's foot. The foot, he owned, would have to be cast again later. So he set himself to the task with Titanic energy ; then uncovered one part after another, and found each as he desired it. But when he came to the heel and saw perfection there as well, that, indeed, half the foot was successful, he felt no delight at being better than his word, only genuine annoyance that he could not go to Cosimo and say, "I told you so. It is as I said—neither more nor less." And the book is strewn with many less reputable instances of this rage of his for being in the right.

But perhaps the head-shaking moralist had best keep away from Cellini's Memoirs—unless he can bring himself to face with equanimity this fact, that

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the impulse I have named, no very high one, was the strongest of those that led to the writing of one of the most curious and vivacious of existing human documents. The book from its first appearance seized hold on readers of nearly every order and every race ; and has become indisputably a classic in defiance of every classic rule. Horace Walpole declared it to be better than any novel. Goethe translated it. It delighted the austere Lessing, the gentle Schiller, and the romantic Lamartine ; and is in higher favour than ever to-day. It holds every reader save the over-fastidious, the delicate-nerved, who shrink from contact with a full-blooded, noisy swaggerer, and are pained by the contemplation of a bully of genius. To the rest Benvenuto offers excellent entertainment—to the lover of adventure, the student of manners or of language, the craftsman, above all to such as delight in a first-hand presentment of human nature.

Yet the book somewhat narrowly missed its fame. Here is the story of the original MS.

Benvenuto Cellini, born in 1500, was fifty-eight years old when he set about writing his Memoirs ; and he brought the work down to the year 1562. He lived till 1571, but apparently left his last years unrecorded. He certainly intended the book for publication ; but, with all his imprudence, he must have seen clearly that to print a work so full of personalities in his lifetime would have been an indiscretion to bring a hornet's nest about his ears.

In whose charge he left the MS. is not known. It is not mentioned in the inventory of his property made at his death—which yet takes note of books and manuscripts. None of the existing copies seem to have been made in his lifetime, nor even in his century. And if they were all made after the original came into the possession of its first known

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owners, they ran the risk of never being made at all. For the Cavalcanti family, in whose hands it rested in the seventeenth century, were jealous guardians of the treasure. Inside the modern binding of the Codex, now in the Laurentian Library, written on a strip of paper in a seventeenth-century hand, can still be read the words — *de' libri di Andrea di Lorenzo Cavalcanti.* Andrea's determination to keep the thing for himself and his own family is attested with curiously fatuous pride by his son, Lorenzo Maria, who wrote on a blank page at the beginning of the MS.—

“ This most singular book was ever held in high esteem by my father, Signor Andrea Cavalcanti, of happy and to me most precious memory. He never would let any one copy it, holding out even against the oft-repeated entreaties made to him by his Most Serene and Reverend Highness, the Prince Cardinal Leopold of Tuscany. For—

“ In Araby the bird of mateless fame
Lives to itself. Parent it is and child.
So is it priz'd. For shining worth's defil'd
By praise which every baser thing can claim.”

But this Lorenzo Maria Cavalcanti presented “ the phoenix,” probably before 1691, to Redi the savant, who quoted it and used it generally in the preparation of the last volume of the fourth edition of the *Vocabolario della Crusca*, published in Florence in 1729—a year after Cocchi's edition of the *Vita*, printed from an uncertain and defective copy, had been issued at Cologne. At Redi's death the original MS. seems to have passed to the Jesuits in Florence, and thence to the PP. Scolopi. After that it completely disappeared for many years, the Scolopi having a tradition that it was sold inadvertently in a heap of worthless books and papers when their library was being cleared of its rubbish. Later it turned up in

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a well-known old book-shop kept by Cecchino dal Seminario, from whom Signor Luigi Poirot, an eminent collector, purchased it, probably about 1805. Dying in 1825, Poirot bequeathed it to the Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana. That this is the original MS., part of which Cellini showed to Varchi in 1559 (see p. xxxv.), there is ample proof. Cellini's own hand is easily distinguished in certain portions, and Varchi has attached his signature to the sonnet he wrote on the report of Benvenuto's death in 1535 (see p. 177). Thus the original, from which all the editions since Tassi's in 1829 have been printed, certainly ran great risks; while the earlier editions and translations depended on a small number of defective copies, which seem to have been transcribed under peculiar difficulties.

I have stated the main theme of the book. To this—by a rare blending of egoism and artistic skill—the lesser themes and the details, with all their boundless variety and interest, are never irrelevant. Benvenuto led a stirring life, and his quarrelsome-ness was but the other side of a notably sociable dis-position. His business brought him into contact with all sorts and conditions of men, and very pro-minently with those who made the history of his time. He was jeweller, goldsmith, sculptor, musician, writer, soldier, duellist, sportsman, man of pleasure. He lived in the great centres of civilisation, in Florence, Rome, and Paris. He saw life in courts and camps; lived cheek-by-jowl with potentates, indulged in insolence to Popes, and in contempt of Cardinals. He was admitted to the friendship of Michael Angelo, and was free of the company of all the lesser artists of his time. Wars, sieges, revolutions, in-trigues, factions, on a great scale and a small, he was familiar with; and he saw enough to fill volume upon volume of memoirs filled with historical narra-tives and political dissertations. The student of

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history dare not overlook him ; but Benvenuto's one theme was himself.

The years covered by his Memoirs—1500-1562—are among the most stirring in the history of Europe. Those of his early manhood and prime are contemporaneous with the struggles of Francis I. and Charles V. (1521-1544) ; and Benvenuto's own country was one of the chief battle-fields. Their armies overran Italy. They intrigued with it and for it ; played one part against another ; cheated it, drained it. Between Pope and King and Emperor life was a long game of war. Moreover, the period includes the struggle of Luther and the Protestant Reformation, the Catholic counter-Reformation, the rise of the Jesuits, and the solidification of the modern idea of the Roman Church in the Council of Trent. His own city of Florence, too, was a battle-field, in which it was always on the losing side. Its vicissitudes spell decadence at every step ; but its decay was dramatic and in a splendid setting —till it settled down to the heavy despotism of the Grand Dukes, which dulled the pain in its body and killed its soul.

And how much does Cellini chronicle ? Well, the stir of war runs through his pages. Across his stage walk the great and notorious princes, soldiers, and politicians of his time—but only so far as they affect his fortunes. A nation may go to ruin : he will not mention it, unless he is nearly concerned. His own city agonised. He left its agony unrecorded, having been engaged more profitably elsewhere than suffering in its throes. Of the Sack of Rome he gives us the most vivid of all the pictures. It would not have cost him half a line had he not been bombardier in St. Angelo, and had he not claimed to be the man who shot the Constable of Bourbon. Charles V.'s return from the Tunis expedition owes the honour of mention to Cellini's

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being deputed by the Pope to give the Emperor a present and make him a speech. This gives a peculiar quality to his pictures of his contemporaries. In all his crowded book there is but one portrait—that of himself ; and it is supreme. But his glimpses of his contemporaries are admirable, if limited. It was in their slack moments, in their undress, that Cellini knew the great ones. He knew them as hagglers, as more or less unpunctual and capricious pay-masters. Their general character and significance, their public aspect, were nothing to him. So take his rough, brisk, biting sketches for what they are— sudden, rude flashes of light on moods and phases of the prominent personages of his time, excellent supplements to the conventional and traditional portraits of these—and you will own them unsurpassable.

Best of all he knew the artist life of his day, his pictures of which, if fewer, less systematic, and also less respectable, are almost more intimate than Vasari's. Nay, he turns the tables on Vasari, and tells tales of Messer Giorgio himself, not at all to his credit, if they be true. Artists at work, artists at play—serious strugglers after technical perfection, jealous hustlers for patronage, wild Bohemian revellers—we meet them all in Cellini's company. Moreover, like most very robust persons, he was deeply interested in his own illnesses. To this fact we owe a whole mass of curious details concerning the practice of medicine and surgery in his day. And if there be hardly a single reflection on the politics or the social state of his time, there are glimpses which are more telling than many dissertations, since he was, for a short space, soldier of the minor *condottiere* type, ready to fight for whoever would pay him—and for the fun of the thing ; and since he was law-breaker, and came into violent collision with the authorities. He was traveller too, in an age when,

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as Goethe says, "every journey was a campaign, and every wayfarer an armed adventurer." So in his company we look to our weapons, and are on the outlook for robbers on the high-roads, and cut-throats in the lonely streets. His simple statement that he was in the habit of turning the corners wide, tells volumes, and not only in the private history of this lusty bravo. He was lord of the Petit Nesle in Paris, living there as *grand seigneur*, dispensing large hospitality to his own countrymen, receiving the gay courtiers of Francis I., and honoured by the serious enmity of the King's mistress. Likewise—and let us not overlook this side of him—he was plain citizen of Rome and Florence, governing a shopful of apprentices, and for a time guardian of a household of seven women relatives!

A vivid impression is left on a large number of readers fresh to Cellini, that the excellent entertainment he provides is mainly due to his being a daring and unscrupulous liar. How far are his stories borne out by recent research? Before the publication of Plon's great volume it may be said that the general attitude to him was one of amused scepticism. Plon vigorously swung opinion round the other way by popularising the results of the elaborate researches of Campori, Arneth, and more especially Bertolotti. These savants tested his statements respecting particular periods of his career by the evidence of contemporary documents. Plon deduced from their results that even in most of his extraordinary relations Benvenuto stuck mainly to facts, and that his memory was excellent. This judgment was enthusiastically maintained by Symonds, who held Cellini to be "a most veracious man," though "his veracity was not of the sort which is at present current"—that is, it was modified by vainglory. His recent and most learned editor, Signor Orazio Bacci, speaks more cautiously, though he seems willing to accept Ben-

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venuto's stories as generally in accordance with facts. On the other hand, in 1898, one important portion of his narrative, that relating to his stay in France, was the object of a most damning onslaught by M. Dimier in his *Benvenuto Cellini à la Cour de France*. He rests his conclusions mainly on the *Journal de François I.* in the *Catalogue des Actes* of that king, and asserts Benvenuto to be a calculating and unscrupulous liar. In his account of his relations with Francis, of the commissions given him for large works of sculpture, of his quarrels with Primaticcio—even to the famous scene of the rival statues—of the origin of Madame d'Étampes's dislike of him, of the circumstances of his leaving France, of the reasons of his failure to return—in respect to all these he is declared to have distorted the truth and defied it. The truthful reputation which Plon and Symonds sought to establish for their “most veracious man” suffers lamentably under the well-directed and repeated blows. But M. Dimier tries to prove too much, and rests too many of his conclusions on Cellini's blunders over dates and places. Because the incident narrated did not happen when and where he says, it does not follow that it never happened at all; and I cannot hold that the critic has proved the impossibility of the extraordinary scene of the rival statues simply by throwing ridicule on it. M. Dimier is too vindictive. But he has substantiated not a few of his accusations.

This is the part of the Life least carefully investigated by Plon. But even before M. Dimier's onslaught, every careful reader of Cellini must have been aware how the *Vita* is often at variance with the *Trattati* respecting this period. Moreover, equivocation is stamped on his account of his departure from France, on his after references to his stay there, on the reasons he gives for not returning. He is shuffling, without any doubt. But though a good

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part of Dimier's contention must be accepted, and though it entirely knocks down Benvenuto's reputation as "a most veracious man," he is not for that proved invariably, nor even generally, a liar. Cellini's sojourn in France was a period apart. It was the most romantic and the least creditable part of his career. He had special motives for lying about it. His head had been turned by his exceptional opportunities and exceptional payments. He had undertaken what the King never wanted, and far more than he could perform. His reckless way of living had ended in a muddle in which he lost the clear distinction between what was provided as material for his work and what was meant for his own provision. I think there is no doubt that in the end he decamped. True, the King was too much engaged at the time to interest himself in art; but Benvenuto certainly felt the moment favourable for escaping from the muddle he had made. That Francis, who was notoriously liberal and easy-going with artists, asked for his accounts at a later date is very significant. M. Dimier has proved that the two apprentices left behind in Paris, whom Cellini loudly abused, had to suffer for their masters' want of scruple. Why did he never go back to the splendid patron he was ever regretting, to the city where he had a great establishment, and, according to his own account, almost a free hand? Patriotism? He had none. Preference for Cosimo? He did not feel it, and had good reason to complain of the Duke's niggardliness. Family responsibilities? The sister and the six nieces could have been supported from a distance. No, having left France under a cloud, he preferred a less spoiled life in Florence to facing the results of his past recklessness in Paris.

But this part of his story is by far the least reliable. Large portions of the rest are corroborated by contemporary documents—though we have always to

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remember he embellished his own part in every drama. True, he may have lied when he said he shot the Constable of Bourbon and wounded the Prince of Orange: his marksman's vanity was excessive. There is no outside evidence of these feats; but the accidents did, indeed, happen to the two great personages under such circumstances as are related. Cellini may well have been on the walls when the first fell, just outside; and he was certainly bombardier up in the St. Angelo keep when Orange was captain of the besiegers below. But there is ample proof of his general exactitude even in the details of a long series of narratives. The accounts of his relations with the artists of his time, the affair of the false coiners, his quarrels with Tobbia and Pompeo, his pardon for homicide at the Assumption, his interrogatory when accused of stealing the Pope's jewels, many circumstances of his imprisonment in St. Angelo, his naturalisation in France, the favour of Francis I., his quarrels with Bandinelli, and his struggle to be adequately paid by Duke Cosimo, may all be freely accepted—and I see no reason to be particularly sceptical elsewhere, save in regard to the French business, where he had strong motives for equivocation.

As for what he suppressed, part of it may be put down to lapses of memory, and part to unwillingness to go into the details of embarrassing circumstances. I hardly know why he should have omitted to tell of his patent of nobility, nor that he underwent the first tonsure in 1558, and was released from its obligations two years later. But the motive is clear enough of his omission to tell of various terms of imprisonment long after his release from St. Angelo—once, in 1548, evidently on a charge of fraud, and twice in 1556, first for a disreputable offence, which gives colour to Bandinelli's accusation, and later probably for violence. To two of these imprisonments there are references

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in his Sonnets, where he could treat them vaguely as a motive for complaint.

It is time to speak of Benvenuto as artist and craftsman, though this is not the place to attempt more than a general estimate. Into what a world of art was he born ; and what giants were his contemporaries ! Even a rough list of the names of these is overwhelming. But lately dead when he was born were Verrocchio, Crivelli, Ghirlandajo, Pollaiuolo. Still alive in his childhood were Vivarini, Filippino Lippi, Mantegna, Gentile Bellini, Giorgione, Botticelli, Pinturicchio, Bramante ; in his youth and early manhood, Giovanni Bellini, Fra Bartolommeo, Carpaccio, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Basaiti, Luca Signorelli, Perugino. Older than he, but contemporary with his years of active work, were Franciabigio, Marcantonio Raimondi, Albert Dürer, Andrea della Robbia, Palma Vecchio, Andrea Sansovino, Andrea del Sarto, Antonio da San Gallo, Correggio, Peruzzi, Giulio Romano, Sebastian del Piombo, Sodoma, Rustici, Pontormo, Michael Angelo, Jacopo di Sansovino, and Titian. Born in the same year as himself were Paris Bordone and Daniele da Volterra. Among his younger contemporaries were Bronzino, Bassano, Moroni, Vasari, Palladio, and Tintoretto.

These were the men that made Cellini's world and the atmosphere he breathed. Princes and popes and cardinals were little more to him than the pay-masters of art, more especially of himself. About their affairs of state he knew little and cared less. Their wars he held as mere hindrances to the artist's business—unless, as in the Sack of Rome, he was given a place of prominence and the chance of playing a winning game of nine-pins with his fellow-men below. Of all those who appear prominently in his pages there is but one man—besides himself—who is treated with invariable respect. His patrons are now

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flattered, now slandered. But Michel Agnolo is always the divine. And Benvenuto lost a good chance of employment in England rather than work under him who broke the divine master's nose. So far at least as his own country was concerned, he was surely in the right. Who else in all the confusion of the times manifested power if not the artists? They, at least, were still alive, ceaselessly active, unconquered, and secure. If their greatness, too, was threatened, if they—all save the Venetians—were attacked by the cankering malady that made them so solitary in their grandeur, Cellini never knew it. He had no brooding mind like his divine friend. He gloried in what were symptoms of decay—and gloried in good company. If ever the artist had the right to be arrogant, it was then, when he could claim to be part of the one power that did not fail, that did not betray, nor was betrayed. And arrogance there was, though it culminated in Cellini. When he puts these words into the mouth of the Pope—"Learn that men like Benvenuto, unique in their profession, are not subject to the laws"—he may not be an exact reporter, but he is speaking his own sincere faith. This is a language we hear sometimes in little artistic coteries, but in mincing, slender tones, not lustily shouted as from Benvenuto's heart. And nobody listens, even when the claim is more modest. Art to-day is not respected; does not respect itself. It is not a fact that counts in modern life, with the general; and there are many facts that do. The arrogance of the artist is, therefore, now a pathetically ineffective protest against the materialism of the times, or mere personal conceit. But such arrogance in sixteenth-century Italy had a whole world of glorious achievement to back it, achievement which had captured the general sentiment, and made the artist in popular belief the man best worth paying for. Moreover, the arrogance had

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for its good neighbour professional self-respect. And when we come to Benvenuto as craftsman we can give up gibing at him as swaggerer, roysterer, braggart, and buffoon, and rest a while in whole-hearted admiration of the man who loved his work with a consuming love such as makes us busy mechanics of a later day pause and wonder. I am not now speaking of his achievements, but of the delight evident in nearly every page of his Memoirs in the unsparing use of his wits, his fingers, his imagination in the exercise of his craft. And no mere facile sweet delight either : Flaubert's *Je me gratté en criant* might have been his cry too, had it been in his nature ever to have confessed bewilderment and confusion. From his earliest youth this passion burns in him. When his temper drives him to run away from his father, when his violence forces him into exile, his new home has first of all to provide him with work and a school for fresh learning. Every field he has not yet entered tempts him. He adds craft to craft, and when he has mastered many, yearns to try himself against the specialists in each. We need not take his own word as proof of invariable triumph ; but his eager, curious, jealous, unremitting effort is amply attested. And braggart as he was, to whom a second place was barely tolerable, he sat at many masters' feet. His words would lead us to suppose he believed himself to be a master from the start ; but actual facts show his career to have been one long and willing apprenticeship. Remember, too, he was a man of strong animal passions, and he indulged them. His business forced him to hang about the courts of Rome and Florence and Paris ; and he had no austerity to make him proof against their temptations. But his work was ever first with him. He was luxurious and greedy, and he never betrayed it for luxury or greed. Whatever rank Cellini takes among the great artists and craftsmen of the world,

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no worker can read his eager, rushing tale, epic in its force, of the casting of the Perseus without a quickening of the pulses, a rising of the sap.

What did this rage for learning and work end in? We cannot count all his value now. Most of his work, doubtless the best of it—for he was goldsmith by natural genius, and sculptor by force of will and ambition—has gone long ago into the melting-pot. Of the long list of works referred to in his writings—the jewels, coins, medals, vases—but a little fraction remains. They show a superb mastery over his craft. Their finish of detail explains the slowness which tired out his patrons. But fashion has swung round from him now too far, in revenge for his former popularity. His smaller work is by no means all niggling: it often shows a fine richness of fancy along with its delicacy of workmanship. Only in the things planned on a larger scale does one see the melancholy combination of skill to make the world wonder, as he himself would have said, applied to a conception without dignity and without worth. But if he is decadent, he is not frail. He has turned away from nature; has no notion of the real source of inspiration; yet his work is vital with a life, it may be corrupt, and sometimes even heavily stupid, but full-blooded and proud. On Michael Angelo is cast the blame for the faults of his sculpture and even of Bandinelli's. They took from the great master what they had the power to take, and left the rest—which was all the greatness of the man. As Müntz says, “Il semblait que pour les Bandinelli, les Ammanati, les Tribolo, les Benvenuto Cellini, Michel-Ange n'eut jamais sculpté que le Bacchus, l'Adonis, le Cupidon.” General opinion is almost ready to echo Molinier's—“Cellini . . . a toute sa vie amené à force son talent . . . Ses sculptures sont des figures bonnes à décorer des salières et . . . sa salière est trop une sculpture.” Yet if the Perseus be not great, it is

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marvellously ingenious ; and behind the ingenuity is the life and force of genius. I think no one can be found now to defend the Nymph of Fontainebleau, vulgar in design and clumsy in execution. But the busts of Cosimo and Bindo Altoviti, though they mark a terrible fall from Donatello, are at least vigorous specimens of portraiture from the hand of a master craftsman.

Baretti called Benvenuto as author the *meglio maestro di stile che s'abbia l'Italia*—which is sheer nonsense. But the Memoirs are a wholesome counterblast to much modern talk about literary style. The book lives, not only as a curious survival, or as a museum to illustrate a bygone time, but with the same degree of force as a northern saga, and this against every law that rules in the writing craft. These he defied as the rival founders said he defied the laws of art in the casting of his Perseus, save that here his defiance was unchallenged ignorance. As Bacci reminds us, the book was put together by an unlettered bravo dictating to a child. He had a fluent pen, an itch to be writing, and to the end he was on the verge of illiteracy. Yet a long chorus of praise has gone up on what has been called his style, from the most exacting critics among his compatriots, who condone with magnanimity his crimes against the genius of their tongue, down to the veriest beginner in the Italian language, grateful for a lively story, an ordinary vocabulary—save where technical points are in question—and a general meaning never hard to seek. There are passages of admirable narrative that no conscious skill could have bettered. If he has any rival as a master of anecdote, it is only among his own countrymen. There are in his book a few memorable phrases which by their discovery of the living, sole, final word, proclaim him poet and artist. Apart from these a large portion of the work remains, with every page urging us to ask

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about the much-vaunted writer, has he any style at all? And one is sometimes inclined to answer, If schoolboys, our English breed, have style in their intercourse with each other, let us grant it to Cellini. If charwomen, our fluent London breed, in their apologetic, explanatory humour, have style, his place is secure. It is not merely that Benvenuto was of the people and spoke the people's speech. On the one hand, that is his peculiar strength. At his best he has their pith, their rough sagacity, their forcible invective, their direct and vivid imagery. Therefore is his book a treasure-house for the philologist, the popular historian, the lover of character and the picturesque. But at his worst he represents the people when they are engaged on an unaccustomed task, and when, conscious of this, they lose their supreme gift of simplicity, to regain which requires the long literary education Benvenuto never underwent. And thus you can count the examples not by the score but by the thousand, where what should have been from an educated hand a statement of the directest, simplest kind, is tortured into a solemn, intricate network of meaningless and inaccurate clauses. He had a strong but simple mind; he had a great mass of things to utter; and unluckily he sometimes grew conscious he was engaged in the dignified pursuit of literature. Then he felt the different facts should be combined, not set out in short staccato fashion as if he were talking to the lads in his workshop. Combine them he did—and Heaven help the tenses, the conjunctions, the logical sequence! He had done his best, and was mightily pleased thereat. But I don't wonder Varchi shirked the task of revision. There are certain peculiarities of Cellini's Italian that no translator has ever rendered. Indeed, anything like a literal rendering of his syntax, though it might be as near akin to Cockney as to his own classic speech, would be intolerable. We can but strive to reproduce

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the spirit of the man, nor let its fire go out. So in summing up Cellini the writer, we have this to face. Nearly illiterate, judged by the standard of classic Italian, he by no means retained the direct simplicity of the unlettered. He had frequently a literary intention, and every time that intention failed. And his book is literature. Now by slovenliness, now by muddleheadedness, now by lack of art, he does his best to dull the thing he has to say—and in its essentials the thing is never dulled. At the back of his untrained speech was an exuberant force of personality, a tyrannical need that compelled expression, splendidly effective, if not the best. He fumbled about his words, never about his purpose, which was clear, limited, and without complexity—to represent himself in the midst of his struggling life, lashed by a rain of calumnies, tossed by the furious winds of envy and injustice, yet mostly triumphant, and ever in the right.

Besides the *Vita*, Benvenuto's best-known work is the *Treatises on Goldsmithing and Sculpture*. This was published in his lifetime, in 1568, but in a form revised out of all likeness to the author's style—probably by Gherardo Spini. Only in 1857 was the work as Cellini wrote it presented by Milanesi. The *Trattati* have special interest for craftsmen, but not for craftsmen only. Benvenuto could not but be autobiographical; and his description of methods and processes is interspersed with chapters of his own story, some of them amplifications or variations of incidents in the *Vita*. Then there are certain *Discorsi* on Architecture and on the old quarrel between Painting and Sculpture, as well as various letters, which form interesting supplements to the Memoirs.

But he was poet, too; and here let us observe that, if Benvenuto had any modesty at all, it was in regard to his literary efforts. Of the accomplishment which has brought him his best and most

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lasting fame, he does not brag. According to him, all men are born philosophers and poets. "Since then I was born a man, I am a philosopher and poet; but in the great arts there are men of all degrees of aptitude, and mine is not of the finest kind, for I have little practice. Recognising, therefore, this difference, I have given the name of *Boschereccia* (rusticities) to my philosophy and poetry." His sonnets are rugged, indeed, and for the most part worthless, save so far as they throw some corroborative light on the Memoirs. But now and then a line, once or twice a whole poem, rises above the dead level of commonplace and incapacity. Mabellini has printed in all about 147 pieces. Many of them are compliments addressed to patrons and artists. Some are vaguely termed spiritual; but neither in spirituality nor in literary power do they much surpass the doggerel interspersed here and there in the *Vita*. One of the two sonnets, however, flung at Bandinelli is a clever bit of invective. Therein Benvenuto owns he has killed living men, but the earth covers them decently; while Baccio has wrought death among stones, and his corpses strew the earth, rotting in all men's sight. That on the death of Giovanni delle Bande Nere is a vigorous and well-turned eulogy; and once at least he uttered in rhyme what was best in him—his love of life, the inexhaustible vitality of the old Pagan:—

Cerca la morte ognor tormi la vita,
Ma la mia vita supera la morte,
Se ben grande è la corte della morte,
Non n'è minor la corte della vita.
Non può far mai la morte senza vita,
Ma la vita può far senza la morte.

A word as to Cellini's translators. It is a great misfortune to his fame in England, and an irremedi-

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able loss to English letters, that the MS. of his Life was hid away in an Italian library in our great age of translators, the age that gave us Florio's *Montaigne* and North's *Plutarch*, and certain of the Italian *novelle*. He has the full-bodied flavour they relished, the vivacious physiognomy they could so admirably render with their broad, effective strokes and living colour. We have entirely lost their tradition—lost their splendid art and their audacity, their contempt for detail and peddling accuracy, if so be they could express an individuality well-nigh as strong as, if not identical with, the original. Of all who have translated Cellini, Goethe, in my judgment, comes nearest to their level. His ideal was at least faintly theirs. His rendering is in admirable narrative German, without any undue striving after an archaic style—that bastard of literature. And though he worked from Cocchi's inaccurate and incomplete edition, yet such as know the book from his version, know it, I hold, in all its essentials. I am well aware of his defects. Where Benvenuto's Italian editors are in doubt as to his meaning, or where his later translators are at variance—and the cases are not few—it is no good appealing to the great Goethe as arbiter. Is there any real difficulty of language? He invariably shirks it—or say, rather, in his grand way, sails over it. He is artist, not grammarian. All he offers is an intelligent approximation to the sense of Cellini's quite unimportant obscurities.

Our present ideals of translation, when we happen to have any, are quite different. They are scientific, philological, rather than artistic, and too often, in spite of excellent qualities, the work has the air of being done not so much for the sake of literature as under the eye of the examiner. The two earlier English versions of Cellini have the virtues of neither class. Nugent's hardly counts now. Roscoe's has individuality of style, but an individuality which is

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pedantic and often unpleasant. For the rest, it does not satisfy the loosest standard of correctness. English readers owe a great debt to Symonds, as do all translators who come after him, and I most gratefully acknowledge mine. His version has not lacked appreciation ; but only one who has grappled with the same task can adequately know his unsparing conscientiousness, his patient, unremitting zeal for accuracy. Where he differs from others, he does so after long and deliberate research. No follower of his can be slipshod or indifferent to detail. But the modern system has its defects we none of us can escape from. The pressing ideal of strict justice to each individual clause, compelling here the choice of archaisms, there of colloquialisms of the day, and again of foreign idioms, as if to force on the reader that something very difficult is being done for him—which, in truth, is often the case—tends to a lack of artistic coherence, and the result is apt to be something much better in the part than in the whole.

A curious blunder has been made with regard to Cellini's portrait. The white-bearded benevolent person who appears as the frontispiece of Tassi's edition and of Symonds's translation is not Cellini at all, and bears no resemblance to him. There is but one certainly authentic portrait, that in Vasari's fresco in the Sala di Cosimo I. in the Palazzo Vecchio of Florence, where the Grand Duke is represented as sitting in the midst of the sculptors, architects, and engineers employed by him. Now at a later date names have been inscribed under certain of the portraits, and these do not always agree with the clear description of Vasari himself, who, in his *Ragionamenti*, names most of the personages, and states their positions in the picture. This he does for Cellini, who, he says, “is contending with Francesco di Ser Jacopo.” Now if the white-bearded benevolent old man is contending with any one it is

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with Bandinelli, of whose identity there is no doubt. The only one who answers to Vasari's description is the vigorous, fiery man, the second to Cosimo's left, our Benvenuto to the life, of an age, too, corresponding to Cellini's at the time the fresco was executed—probably in 1556—and agreeing in all essentials with the various traditional portraits published at a time when any blunder on the point could be checked.

And the man? Well, he has painted his portrait ineffaceably. Every bragging word of his but adds another life-like touch. If one must estimate him, make a second-hand version of what he has done with supreme skill, at least let us not utterly blur the picture. The apologist of Cellini is as absurdly out of place as the vindictive moralist. Judged by the standards of his own day—no very high one, the authorities of the late Renaissance would have us believe—he is not admirable. I have said he was but indifferent honest. He was often a liar when vanity or self-interest dictated, though much too truculent to lie from fear. Of morality in the narrower sense he had none; and if his contemporaries were not scrupulous in this regard, it is hard on the average man of his day to say Cellini was no more shameless or brutal. His temper was notoriously vile. To be his critic—were you pope or prince—was to brave his insolence. To contradict him was to risk being knocked down. To be his rival was to face death every day. On the many familiar instances, laughable or tragic, I need not dwell. But I might add that his latest commentator, a zealous student of the manuscript of the Memoirs, has discerned evidence, in the occasional shakiness of the writing, of the terror he inspired in his boy amanuensis. He confessed to three homicides—the man who killed his brother, Pompeo the goldsmith, and the postmaster at Siena. Those who narrowly

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escaped death at his hands when he ran amok were not few, and he does not name them all. Yet it should be owned that his contempt sometimes came to the help of his victims, as on that evening when he met his enemy Bandinelli on the road from Fiesole, and did not kill him because Baccio seemed such a poor thing and a coward ; and again when he withdrew the knife from Micceri's throat because the rascal did not defend himself. If his rage did not always find vent in murder, it did so sometimes in a petty spite, almost incredible in its meanness, as when he cut the bed-furniture of the inn to pieces because the landlord had insisted on being paid beforehand ; sometimes in a brutality so vile, as in the affair of Caterina, as to far outdo the scandal of his murders. I might set up a defence of him on some points. His patrons cheated him, and delayed his payments in shameless fashion. As for his lying—he was a man of vivid fancy, credulous, and a braggart. For his murders, I might quote his own words—“What I have done I did in defence of that body which God has lent me. Therefore, I do not own that I have deserved that death, seeing what are the conditions in which we live in the world.” I have no doubt that Pierluigi Farnese, who was an utter scoundrel, did, indeed, try to compass his death. And the popular vendetta code permitted him to revenge his brother. But when all is said and done, you cannot whitewash Benvenuto into respectability. Symonds thinks he was neither base nor a rogue. I think he was both. To minimise or explain his enormities is not the way to give him his due. When you have called him rogue you have not come to the end of Cellini. He had phases enough, activities enough, to make his rascalities seem but incidents in his career.

At every other moment the man of violence is giving way to the serious, enthusiastic worker,

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dauntless, ready for sacrifice, full of resource. The follower after base pleasure vanishes to let the man of mystic imagination come on the scene. You may smile at Benvenuto's piety. It is of the kind which nowadays is only reputable for nations, it being no longer permitted to individuals to feel, whatever their conduct, they walk specially protected, beyond all other men, by the Almighty, so that their enemies are His. Benvenuto's visions never curbed his vices. But with all their absurdity, they have the stuff of poetry in them. His was not the horizon of the vulgarian. After all, a summary of Cellini is not very easy. Unmoral, unspiritual he was beyond all dispute ; yet we find him listening in prison to the high morality of Savonarola from the lips of a fellow-prisoner, and this though Savonarola, in his view, had been but a low disturber of the peace, an audacious meddler with the tyranny by divine right of the Medici. He had his moments of strong pietistic emotion, in which he did the most surprising, the most self-deceiving things. Of all the pilgrimages ever made I can think of none more strange than that of this bravo, pagan in the very fibres of him, faring up the lonely mountain-path to Alverna. The gentle Francis tamed wolves and robber-men. But Benvenuto ! And the picture of him going hand in hand with his little niece upon St. Lucy's day, to give a golden eye to the saint whose aid he had invoked for the cure of his sight, should not be forgotten in a career which mostly presents quite other ones. It had better be remembered with a smile rather than a sneer.

He had strong domestic affections. He was a dutiful and helpful son. His tale of his brother Cecchino's death has the accent of genuine manly sorrow. So has his letter to Varchi on the death of his little son Giovanni. He did well by that household of women, his sister and six nieces, whom he maintained in Florence.

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He was a man of many friends, though that he kept many of the more intimate for long I do not say. But that he was ever on terms of friendship with such men as Michael Angelo, Bronzino, Giulio Romano, Bembo, Varchi, Caro, Luigi Alamanni, speaks well for his occasional dignity, for his intellectual worth—though in such company his boundless vitality must have counted for much, and perhaps his amusing childlike vanity for not a little. But among the lesser men who were his companions there were some who loved him. Felice, his partner, did ; and so did Pier Landi. Greedy to win money though he was, he was open-handed. If you were in want of help he'd be as ready to thrust golden *scudi* into your hand as to knock you down, if you came in his way. Witness the story of Luigi Pulci ; also the large hospitality he dispensed in Paris ; also his treatment—and this was something better than mere open-handedness—of his adopted son.

Sociable, ready-witted, ingenious, active-brained, and unfastidious, he was fit to live in many circles, and fit to live peaceably in none for long. For good or evil, with his uneasy blood, his overpowering consciousness of himself, he was one to make a stir in whatever corner of the world he sojourned. Braggart and bully he stalks across his own stage, a kind of travesty of the Nietzschean *Übermensch*, terrifying his contemporaries, and raising a smile on our faces only because we are looking on from the safe distance of centuries. He is unlike any of the men of to-day, and far more real than most. The exuberance in him lives on, insolently laughing at apologies and defences, crying, “Go, dissect dead men, and write neat epitaphs upon their tombstones. I am still alive—and incalculable.”

March 1903.

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LETTER OF BENVENUTO CELLINI TO BENEDETTO VARCHI

(To whom he had sent some part of the MS. of his Memoirs)

YOUR lordship tells me that the simple discourse of my Life contents you more in its first shape than were it polished and retouched by others—for then the truth of what I have written would show less clear ; and I have taken great care to say nothing of things for which I should have had to fumble in my memory. Indeed, I have told naught save the truth, omitting many wonderful happenings which others in my place would have made very prominent ; for I had so many great things to tell that not to make too thick a volume I have left out many of the smaller. I now send my own servant, to whom you can give my wallet and the book. I think you cannot have been able to read the whole, but I do not wish to weary you with a wretched trifles like this. I have had from you what I wanted, and am much satisfied therewith. So with all my heart I thank you. Now I beg you not to trouble to read farther, but to send it back to me, all save the sonnet, which I am fain should have some polishing from that marvellous file of yours. Ere long I shall come to visit you, and I am ever at your service so far as my knowledge and my power extend.

Keep well, I beg of you ; and hold me still in your good favour.

FLORENCE, 22nd May 1559.

If your lordship would keep in mind to do some little service to my young friar, I should be much beholden to you. Awaiting your lordship's commands,

BENVENUTO CELLINI.

PREFATORY SONNET AND DECLARATION BY CELLINI

Here my life's struggling story I make plain
To thank the God of Nature, who has still
Tended the soul He gave me. By His will,
Diverse and high my deeds—and I remain.
My cruel fate hath warr'd with me in vain :
Life, glory, worth, and all unmeasur'd skill,
Beauty and grace, themselves in me fulfil,
That many I surpass, and to the best attain.
But man's frail thoughts fly 'fore the wind like sand.
Now know I all the waste, and sorely blame
The precious time I have in trifles spent.
Yet, since remorse is vain, I'll be content.
Welcome I mount, as Welcome down I came
Into the flower of this good Tuscan land.

I had begun to write this Life of myself with my own hand, as may be seen in certain mended pages [of the MS.]. But I reflected that I was losing too much time, and that this was but excessive vanity. So falling in with a son of Michele di Goro of Pieve a Groppine, a lad of about fourteen years old, and weakly, I set him to write for me. Thus while I worked I dictated to him my Life. And as I took no little pleasure in the thing, I worked all the more diligently and was the more productive. So I left the burden of the writing to the boy; and I hope to go forward with the task as far as my recollections will serve me.

**THE LIFE OF BENVENUTO
SON OF MAESTRO GIOVANNI CELLINI
OF FLORENCE,
*WRITTEN BY HIMSELF IN THAT CITY.***

BOOK I

i. All men, whatever be their condition, who have done anything of merit, or which verily has a semblance of merit, if so be they are men of truth and good repute, should write the tale of their life with their own hand. Yet it were best they should not set out on so fine an enterprise till they have passed their fortieth year. And now this very thing occurs to me, when I am fifty-eight years old and more, here in Florence, where I was born. Many are the adversities I can look back on such as fall to the lot of man ; yet am I freer from the same than I have ever been till now. In truth it seems to me I have greater content of mind and health of body than at any time in the past. Some pleasant happenings I recall, and, again, some unspeakable misfortunes, which, when I remember, strike terror into me and wonder that I have, indeed, come to this age of fifty-eight, from which, by God's grace, I am now going on my way rejoicing.

ii. Doubtless, such men as have laboured and

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gained some repute have given to the world thereby a knowledge of themselves ; and it should be enough for them to have proved they were men and to be known for such. Yet we must live as we find others do ; and so it is but natural some little vain-glory should creep into a thing of this kind ; and this may show itself in divers ways, the first being when a man lets the world know he comes of a very long and virtuous line.

My name is Benvenuto Cellini, and I am the son of Maestro Giovanni, son of Andrea, son of Cristofano Cellini. My mother was Madonna Elisabetta, daughter of Stefano Granacci ; and both my parents were citizens of Florence. In the chronicles drawn up by our Florentines of ancient days, men worthy of faith, according to the report of Giovanni Villani, it stands written that the city of Florence must have been built after the pattern of the fair city of Rome. And some traces of the Colosseum and of the Baths are still to be seen near Santa Croce. The Capitol was where the Old Market is to-day. The Rotonda, built for the temple of Mars, still stands ; now it belongs to our Saint John. That so it was can be very plainly seen, and none can deny it ; but these buildings are much smaller than those of Rome. They say it was Julius Cæsar had them built, in conjunction with certain noble Romans, who, when Fiesole had been laid siege to and taken, built a city in this place, each of them undertaking to erect one of these famous monuments. Among Julius Cæsar's chief captains was a valorous man, by name Fiorino of Cellino, a hamlet about two miles from Monte Fiascone. Now this Fiorino having taken up his abode under Fiesole, where Florence now is, in order that he might be near the river Arno for the convenience of the army, all the soldiers and other persons who had intercourse with the said captain, were wont to say, "Let us go to Fiorenze,"—first,

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because this captain's name was Fiorino, and likewise because, from the nature of the soil, flowers grew abundantly on the spot where he had taken up his quarters. So at the foundation of the place, this name seeming to Julius Cæsar a very fair one, and offered naturally, and since flowers are of good augury, he gave the name of Florence to the city. Moreover, he wished to give pleasure to his valorous captain, all the more that he had raised him from a very lowly place, and that he had been the making of such an able man. Learned contrivers and investigators of the origin of words would have the name to mean, on the flowing Arno; but this it seems impossible to accept, for Rome is on the flowing Tiber, Ferrara on the flowing Po, Lyons on the flowing Saone, Paris on the flowing Seine, yet are their names different and come at by another road.

Thus much we find ; and so do we believe ourselves descended from a man of worth. Besides, we Cellinis are to be found in Ravenna, the most ancient city of Italy, and men of noble birth are not wanting there. In Pisa, too, there are some, and I have come upon them in many places of Christendom; moreover, in this State the name is not extinct among men following the profession of arms. For not long ago, a young man called Luca Cellini, nay, a beardless boy he was, fought with a practised soldier and a most valiant man, Francesco da Vicorati by name, who was a noted duellist. Yet Luca, by his own might, sword in hand, overcame him and killed him with such bravery and skill that everybody was astonished, having looked for just the contrary. So that I glory in my descent from men of valour.

And now whatever honours I may have won for my house in the ordinary course of life as it is lived to-day, and by my art—though I make no great account of these—I shall tell of the same in due

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season. But much prouder am I of having been born in a humble station, and of having laid an honourable foundation for my house, than if I had been of great lineage, and by my vices had blackened and defaced it. So now I begin my story by telling how it pleased God I should be born.

iii. My forefathers dwelt in the Val d'Ambra, where they had great possessions. Having retired there on account of the raging factions, they lived like little lords ; and all of them were doughty men of arms. In that time a younger son of the house, Cristofano by name, had a great quarrel with certain neighbours and friends. The heads of both houses intervened, and so great a fire was seen to be kindled as imperilled the very existence of the two families. The elders pondered the matter, and it was agreed my own people should send away Cristofano, while the other side removed the youth who had been the cause of the quarrel. They sent their man to Siena; our family dispatched Cristofano to Florence, where they bought for him a little house in the Via Chiara, near by the convent of Sant' Orsola, and likewise some excellent property at Ponte a Rifredi. Cristofano took to himself a wife in Florence, and begat sons and daughters. When all the daughters were settled in life, the sons after their father's death divided the rest of the inheritance. The house in the Via Chiara, with some other few things, fell to one of the said sons, Andrea by name. He in his turn took a wife, and had four sons, the eldest of whom was called Girolamo ; the second Bartolommeo ; the third Giovanni—afterwards my father ; and the fourth Francesco.

This Andrea Cellini had a good understanding of the fashion of architecture of those days ; adopted it as his profession, and lived by it. Giovanni, who was my father, took more interest in it than did any of the others. And because Vitruvius says, amongst

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other things, that he who would be an adept at this art must needs know something of music and of good design, Giovanni became an able draughtsman, and then began to study music, learning, along with the science of that art, to play excellently on the viola and the flute. Being a man of studious habits, he seldom went out of the house. Next door to them lived one Stefano Granacci, who had several daughters, all of them very beautiful. Now as it pleased God, Giovanni saw one of these girls whose name was Elisabetta, and so much did she please him that he asked her for his wife. And because both the fathers were well acquainted with each other, from being such near neighbours, it was easy to bring about the marriage, and each thought the arrangement a good one for himself. First the two old fellows settled the match, and then they set about discussing the dowry, which gave rise to a little friendly dispute between them. For Andrea said to Stefano : " My son Giovanni is the bravest young man in Florence, nay in all Italy ; and if I had cared to find a wife for him before now, I might have had the best dower which is ever given in Florence among folk of our condition." And Stefano answered : " You are a thousand times right ; but here am I saddled with five girls and as many boys. I have made my calculations, and this is as much as I can afford." Here Giovanni, who, unseen by them, had been listening for a while, came out suddenly and said : " My father, it is the girl I have longed for and loved, not their money. Bad luck to such as would get rich on his wife's dowry. Indeed, since you have been bragging of my great cleverness, shall I not be able to keep my wife and satisfy her needs even with a less sum of money than you have set your heart on ? Now I would have you understand that the lady is mine. As for the dowry, I leave it to you." Hereat Andrea Cellini, who was of rather

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an irritable temper, was somewhat displeased. But in a few days Giovanni brought home his lady, and never asked for any other portion. For eighteen years they rejoiced in their youth and their blessed love, yet longing greatly for children; after which time Elisabetta miscarried of two male children by reason of the doctor's blundering. Later she was again with child, and bore a girl, to whom they gave the name of Cosa, after my father's mother. Two years passed and she was once more with child; and whereas the strong cravings to which pregnant women are slaves, were precisely like those she had on the former occasion, they all made up their minds she was about to bear another daughter, and the name of Reparata was agreed on, after my mother's mother. Now it happened that the child was born on the night after All Saints' Day of the year 1500, at half-past four exactly. The midwife, who knew that a woman-child was expected, so soon as she had washed the creature and swaddled it in finest white linen, crept up softly to Giovanni, my father, and said, "I bring you a good gift which you were not looking for." My father, who had been pacing up and down the floor, said, like the true philosopher he was, "What God sends is ever dear to me." Then he took off the swaddling clothes and beheld the unexpected male child. Clasping his old hands together, and raising his eyes to God, he said, "Lord, I thank Thee with all my heart. This is very precious unto me. I bid him welcome." Everybody who was there asked him in their joy what name he had given the child, and Giovanni gave no other answer than to say, "He is Welcome [Benvenuto]." And so was it determined. This name was given me in Holy Baptism; and with it I am living still by the grace of God.

iv. My grandfather, Andrea Cellini, was still alive when I was about three years old and he was more than

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a hundred. One day a cistern pipe was being moved, when out of it came a great scorpion. Unseen by the others, it slipped from the cistern to the ground and crept away under a bench. I saw it and ran and laid hold of it. So large was it that when I clenched it in my little fist the tail stuck out from one end and from the other its two claws. In high delight I ran, they tell me, to my grandfather, saying, "Look, grandad, at my dear little crab." When he saw it was a scorpion, he all but fell dead of fright and anxiety for me. With many caresses he begged me to give it to him ; but I only clutched it the tighter, weeping and declaring I would not give it up to anybody. My father, who was also in the house, came running at the sound of my cries. Dazed with terror, he could for the moment think of no way of preventing the venomous animal from killing me. But suddenly his eyes fell on a pair of shears, and so, coaxing me the while, he cut off the tail and the claws. Then when the great danger was over, he took the happening for a good omen.

One day when I was about five years old, my father was sitting in a ground-floor room of ours in which washing had been going on, and where a large fire of oak logs had been left. Giovanni, his viola on his arm, was playing and singing by himself near the fire—for it was very cold. Looking into the fire he chanced to see in the middle of the most ardent flames a little creature like a lizard disporting itself in the midst of the intensest heat. Suddenly aware of what it was, he called my sister and me and pointed it out to us children. Then he gave me a sound box on the ears, which made me cry bitterly, on which he soothed me with kind words, saying, "My dear little fellow, I did not hurt you for any harm you had done, but only that you might remember that the lizard in the fire there is a salamander, which never has been seen for a certainty by any one

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before." Then he kissed me and gave me some farthings.

v. My father began to teach me to play the flute and to sing music ; and though I was of very tender years when little children are wont to be pleased with a whistle and such-like playthings, I had a particular dislike to it, so that only from obedience did I ever play or sing. In those days my father made wonderful organs with wooden pipes, and spinets the best and finest that had ever been seen, as well as violas, lutes, and harps, all of them beautifully and excellently fashioned. He was an engineer, too, and showed a wonderful talent in inventing instruments for lowering bridges, for fulling, and other machines. Likewise was he the first to work well in ivory. But when he had fallen in love with her who became my mother—and perhaps the little flute played some part in that, for he gave more time to it than he should—he was asked by the fifers of the Signory to play with them. This he did for a time for his own pleasure, and then they worked on him till he became one of their company. But Lorenzo de' Medici and Piero his son, who were very fond of him, presently began to see that he was giving himself up entirely to fifing, thus neglecting his fine inventive talent and his delightful art. So they took his place away from him. At this my father felt very sore, for he thought a great wrong had been done him. But he betook himself without delay to his art once more, and made a mirror, about a cubit in diameter, of bone and ivory, with figures and foliage exquisitely wrought and of beautiful design. The mirror was in the shape of a wheel ; in the middle was the glass, and round about were seven circles, in which were carved, of combined ivory and black bone, the seven Virtues ; and the whole mirror, and therefore, likewise, of course, the Virtues, were poised so that as the wheel turned, all the figures

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turned too ; but as weights were attached to their feet they kept upright. And since he had some knowledge of the Latin language, he put a Latin verse round the mirror, namely :—

Rota sum : semper, quoquo me verto, stat Virtus.

(Turn Fortune's wheel whithersoe'er it may,
Still Virtue stands erect.)

In a little while his post of fifer was given back to him. (Although some of these things took place before I was born, still, remembering what I heard of them, I have been unwilling to leave them untold.) In those days the musicians of this company all belonged to most honourable crafts, some of them being even members of the greater guilds of silk and wool. For this reason my father did not disdain to follow the profession of music, and the greatest desire which he had in all the world for me was that I should become a fine player. As for me, the greatest worry of my life was his constantly saying to me that, if I had but the will—such great aptitude for it did he see in me—I might be the foremost man in all the world.

vi. As I have said, my father was a loyal and much-attached servant of the house of the Medici ; and Piero, when he was exiled, confided many things of the utmost consequence to him. Afterwards, when the magnificent Piero Soderini succeeded, and was aware of the wonderful talents of my father—who was still at his musical post—he began to employ him in very important work as an engineer ; and, indeed, while Soderini remained in Florence he showed him every favour possible. At that time I was of tender age, and my father had me carried to the palace and made me play upon the flute, my treble accompanying the musicians of the palace, before the Signory, while a beadle held me on his shoulder. On such occasions the gonfalonier, namely,

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Soderini, loved to make me prattle ; he used to give me sweetmeats, and he would say to my father, "Maestro Giovanni, along with music you should teach him your other delightful arts." To which my father answered, "I would rather he followed no other save music and its composition ; for in this profession I hope to make him the greatest man in the world, so but God spare him unto me." Whereupon one of the old Signors replied, "Ah, Maestro Giovanni, do as the gonfalonier tells you. Why should the boy never be anything better than a good player ?"

And so time went on till the Medici came back again. No sooner were they back than the Cardinal, who was afterwards Pope Leo, began to make much of my father. While they had been away from Florence the balls had been blotted from the scutcheon on their palace, and a great red cross painted in instead—the same being the arms and insignia of the Commune. But at once on their return the red cross was erased, and the Medici red balls on a field of gold were put back in the shield, and all arranged to perfection. My father, who had a quiet vein of poetry in him, and something, too, of the divine gift of prophecy, wrote the following four lines under the coat-of-arms as soon as it was uncovered :—

Under the meek and holy cross of late
These arms, our pride, have deeply buried lain.
They show a glorious, joyful face again ;
For Peter's sacred mantle they await.

The epigram was read by all Florence. A few days later Pope Julius II. died. The Cardinal de' Medici repaired to Rome, and against every one's expectation was made Pope, the liberal and magnanimous Leo X. My father forwarded to him his prophetic quatrain, and the Pope sent him word it would be to his advantage to come to Rome. But my father was

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unwilling ; and so instead of reward, his place in the palace was taken from him by Jacopo Salviati, when the latter became gonfalonier. This is how it came to pass that I was put to the goldsmith's craft ; and part of the time I learned that art, and the rest—but much against my will—I spent in music.

vii. When my father worried me to become a musician, I answered begging him to let me draw so many hours a day, promising him that all the rest of the time I would give myself up to playing, just to please him. "Then you have no pleasure in music ?" he asked. Whereupon I said "No"; for it seemed to me an art far below the one on which my own mind was set. Then in despair the good man placed me in the shop of the Cavaliere Bandinello's father, who was called Michel Agnolo, a goldsmith of Pinzi di Monti, very strong in his craft. He had no advantages of birth, being the son of a coal-chandler. No blame is this to Bandinello, who was the founder of his house. If only he had founded it honourably ! However that be, I have nothing to say of him now. I had only been there a few days when my father took me away from Michel Agnolo, being so made that he could not live without seeing me constantly. So, ill content, I gave myself up to music till I was fifteen. If only I cared to describe all my adventures up to that age, and the mortal dangers that I ran, I should astonish whoever should read of them; but that my story be not too long, and since I have much other to tell, I shall leave them aside.

Now when I was fifteen I placed myself against my father's wish in a goldsmith's shop with a man called Antonio di Sandro, known to most as Marcone the goldsmith. An excellent craftsman was he, and a right honest man, high-minded and liberal in all his dealings. My father did not wish him to pay me wages as he did his other lads, so that, as I had

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chosen this art for my own pleasure, I might be free to draw as much as ever I liked. This I did very willingly, and my good master took endless pleasure in my work. He had an only and natural son to whom he was wont to give orders so that I might be spared. My desire to excel in this art was great, or rather, I might say, my love for it; but, indeed, both were strong in me; so that in a few months my work came up to that of the good, nay, to that of the best young practitioners of the art, and I began to reap the fruit of my labours. Nevertheless I did not fail to give my father pleasure now and then by playing on the flute or on the cornet; and every time I played, I drew tears and deep sighs from him as he sat listening. And so I would often dutifully please him in this way, as if it had been a joy to me as well.

viii. At that time I had a brother two years younger than myself, a very daring, proud-spirited lad, who later became one of the great soldiers in the school of the marvellous Giovannino de' Medici, father of Duke Cosimo. This child was then about fourteen, and I was two years older. One Sunday, about two hours before nightfall, between the San Gallo and the Pinti gates, he fell out with a young man of twenty or so. They fought with swords, and so valorously did he close with his opponent that he dealt him a serious wound, and was for following the thing up. Among the crowd that stood about were many of the young man's kinsfolk, who seeing the affair go ill for him, took out their slings. One of the stones struck my poor young brother's head, and he fell suddenly to the ground, where he lay senseless and as if dead. Now I, who happened to be there without friends and unarmed, had been crying to my brother to make off, that he had done enough, just at the very moment when, as chance willed it, he was struck down. Running to him speedily, I took his sword and

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planted myself between him and the other threatening swords and the shower of stones. Nor did I leave him till from the San Gallo gate came up some valiant fighting men and saved me from the wild rage of the crowd. And much they marvelled to find such bravery in so young a lad. Then I carried my unconscious brother home, where with much difficulty he came to his senses. When he was better, the Eight—who had already arrested our adversaries and sentenced them to several years' banishment—ordered us also to a six months' exile at a distance of ten miles from Florence. “Come with me,” said I to my brother. And so we parted from our poor father, who instead of providing us with money, of which he had none, gave us his blessing. I set off to Siena to find a certain good friend of mine, Maestro Francesco Castoro by name. Once before this, when I had run away from my father, I had sought out this good man, and had stayed with him some days, working at my goldsmith's craft till my father sent for me. When I reached him this time he recognised me, and set me to work. Besides that he gave me lodgings for such time as I should be in Siena, and thither I repaired with my brother, and stuck to my work for many months. My brother had made a beginning in Latin letters, but he was too young to have yet tasted the savour of learning, and so he wasted his days in idleness.

ix. After a time the Cardinal de' Medici, who became Pope Clement, called us back to Florence at my father's prayers. But a certain pupil of my father's, moved thereto by his natural baseness, advised the Cardinal to send me to Bologna to learn music from a famous master there, who was called Antonio, truly a notable man in the musical profession. The Cardinal told my father that, if he sent me thither, he would give me letters of introduction that would help me. Accordingly my father, who nearly died

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of joy at such a proposition, sent me off ; and I, eager to see the world, went with a good will. Reaching Bologna, I set to work under a man called Maestro Ercole del Pifero, and began to make some little money. Every day I went for a music lesson, and in a few short weeks made no little progress in that accursed art. But I made a great deal more out of my goldsmith's craft ; for having received no help from the Cardinal, I placed myself in the house of a Bolognese miniaturist, called Scipione Cavalletti, who lived in the street of Our Lady of Baraccan ; and there I took to designing and working for a Jew called Grazia Dio, with whom I made a fairly good living.

Six months later I went back to Florence ; whereat Pierino, the fifer who had been my father's pupil, was very much vexed. Yet, to please my father, I went to see Pierino at his house, and played the cornet and the flute with one of his brothers, Girolamo by name, several years younger than Pierino, a very honest, good young fellow, just the opposite of his brother. On one such day my father came to Piero's house to hear us play, and, full of his pleasure in my skill, he cried, "I'll make you a wonderful performer yet, and I defy any one to prevent me !" To this Piero replied—and it was the truth he spoke—"Your Benvenuto will reap far more gain and honour if he sticks to his goldsmithing than to this fiving business." So angry was my father at these words—for he saw I was of the same mind as Piero—that he cried out with great heat, "Well I knew it was you who stood in the way of this great desire of mine ; and you it was who had me dismissed from my post at the palace, paying me with that gross ingratitude which is the usual reward of great benefits. I got you appointed there, and you've had me sent packing. It was I taught you whatever you know of music, and you hinder

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my son from doing my will. But keep in mind these prophetic words : Not years, nor months, I say, shall pass, but a few weeks, ere this shameful ingratitude prove your ruin." Then Pierino answered and said, "Maestro Giovanni, most men grow mad as they get old. So is it with you. And this is no surprise to me, since I have watched you freely squander all your property, heedless of your children's needs. Wherefore I mean to do just the contrary : to leave so much to my sons that they may be able to come to the help of yours." Thereto my father replied, "No rotten tree brings forth good fruit, but just the opposite. Moreover, I say to you, you are a worthless man ; and your sons will be mad and poor, and a day will come when they will beg alms of my virtuous and prosperous children." And so we left the house, he and Pierino muttering angry words at each other. I had taken my dear father's part ; and as we came out together I said to him I would fain revenge the insults which that ribald fellow had cast at him—provided he let me betake myself to the art of design. "O my dear son," said my father, "I too have been a good draughtsman ; but as a relief from the extraordinary labours that entails, and for love of me, who am your father, who begat you, reared you, and gave you the beginnings of such distinguished talents, will you not promise me, as repose after your labours, now and then to take up that flute and that enchanting cornet and give yourself up to the pleasure of your own music ?" Yes, I said ; right willingly would I do so for love of him. Then my dear father said that it was by the display of such talents I should best revenge him for the insults of his enemies:

Not quite a month had passed when Pierino, who was having a vault built in his house in the Via dello Studio, was one day with some companions in his

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basement room over the vault. There he began speaking of his former master, my father, and repeating the words which he had said to him respecting his coming ruin. No sooner had he uttered them than the floor of the room where he was fell in—mayhap the vault was badly built ; nay, rather was it not by the mere power of God, who does not pay on Saturday ?—and the stones and bricks falling with him, both his legs were fractured. Meanwhile those who were with him remained on the edge of the vault and took no harm, but stood there stupefied and astounded—all the more on account of what he had been telling them a moment ago as a jest. When my father heard the news, he girt on his sword and went to see him ; and in the presence of the injured man's father, who was called Niccolao of Volterra, a trumpeter of the Signory, addressed him thus : “Piero, my dear pupil, I am indeed sorry for your misfortune ; but if you recollect, it is only a little time since I warned you of it ; and all I said then respecting your children and mine will come to pass.” Shortly afterwards the ungrateful Piero died of this accident. He left a wife of low character and one son, who some years later came to beg alms of me in Rome. I gave him something, both because it is in my nature to give alms to the poor, and because I called to mind with tears the happy condition in which his father had lived when mine had prophesied that Pierino's sons should one day beg from his own worthy children. But now enough has been said about this. Only, none should make mock of the predictions of an honest man when he has been unjustly abused; for it is not he that speaks ; it is verily the voice of God.

x. So I gave myself up to goldsmith's work, and by that means I was of help to my dear father. His other son, my brother Cecchino, had, as I said before, made a beginning in the study of Latin letters. It

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was my father's wish that I, the elder, should be a great musician and performer, and that his younger son should become a great and learned lawyer. But he could not force us from our natural bents, which bound me to the art of design, and my brother, who was finely proportioned and full of grace, to the profession of arms. When he was still a young lad, he came home once from his first lesson in the school of the marvellous Signor Giovannino de' Medici. I was not in when he arrived. In want of seemly clothes to wear, he sought out our sisters, and they, unknown to my father, gave him a doublet and cloak of mine, both of them fine and new. (For, besides helping my father and my good honest sisters, I had been able to buy myself these fine clothes out of my savings.) When I discovered I had been cheated and robbed of my clothes, and could not find my brother, from whom I would have taken them away, I asked my father why he let me be so wronged, seeing that I laboured so hard and with such good-will to help him. To this he replied that I was his good son, but that he had got back again the one he had thought lost. Moreover, it was but right, and, indeed, according to the word of God Himself, that he who had possessions should give unto him who had none. Therefore, he begged me for his sake to bear this injury, and God would give me increase of good things. Then I, being an inexperienced youth, answered my afflicted father with heat ; and taking with me the poor remains of my clothes and money, I made off towards one of the gates of the city. But not knowing which one led towards Rome, I found myself at Lucca ; and from Lucca I went on to Pisa.

When I reached Pisa—I was about sixteen at the time—I stopped near the middle bridge, just where the Fish Stone is, and in front of a goldsmith's workshop. While I was watching attentively what the

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master was doing, he came out and asked me who I was, and what was my calling. I replied that I worked a little in his own business. The good man then invited me into his shop, and gave me work to do on the spot, saying, " You have a look about you which makes me think you are an honest fellow." Then he set gold and silver and jewels before me. And at the end of the first day he took me home to his house, where he lived in honourable condition with his beautiful wife and children. Calling to mind the grief which my good father might be suffering on my account, I wrote to him that I was in the house of an honest man, whose name was Ulivieri della Chiostra, under whom I was doing very fine and important work. I bade him keep his mind easy, for I hoped to learn much, and by my attainments to win ere long what would bring him profit and honour. My dear father answered my letter at once, saying, " My son, such is the love I bear you, that were it not for our honour, which above all things I respect, I should have set out without delay to come to you ; for of a truth I seem to be without the light of my eyes when I do not see you every day as has been my wont. I shall stay here, therefore, for the right conduct of my home affairs, and you meanwhile will give yourself to the perfection of your art. Only, I wish you to keep in mind these two or three simple words, and observe them, and never forget them—

In whatever house you'd stay,
Keep your hands from theft alway."

xi. Now it happened that this letter fell into the hands of my master Ulivieri ; and, unbeknown to me, he read it. Afterwards he confessed having done so, saying, " And now, my Benvenuto, I was not deceived in your pleasant face. This much I learn from a letter from your father, which has fallen into

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my hands. So now think of yourself as in your own home, and with your own father."

While I was in Pisa I used to go and see the Campo Santo ; and there I found many fine antique marble sarcophagi. Also in other places in Pisa I found beautiful antiques, which I studied zealously every day when I could be spared from the labours of the workshop. And when my master paid me visits in the little room he had given me, and came to know that I spent all my time so virtuously, he took as great a liking for me as if he had been my father. In the year I was with him I made a great advance, working in silver and gold, and at most important and beautiful things ; and this gave me the keenest desire to get on still further. My father, in the meantime, kept writing to me most piteously to return to him ; and in every letter he reminded me not to lose the music which had cost him so much trouble to teach me. Whereupon all desire to return to him left me, so much did I loathe that damnable playing on the flute ; and it seemed to me I was in Paradise the whole year I stayed in Pisa, where I never played at all. But when the year was up, Ulivieri, my master, had occasion to go to Florence to sell some gold and silver filings which he had. And as the unwholesome air had given me a little fever, I returned, before I had shaken it off, in my master's company to Florence. There my father gave him the heartiest welcome ; but, unknown to me, begged him piteously not to take me back. I was ill for about two months ; and my father had me treated and cared for most affectionately. But ever he would say it seemed to him a thousand years till I should be well enough to play a little to him on the flute. Now while he spoke to me of this, holding his hand on my pulse the while—for he had some knowledge of medicine and of Latin letters—he perceived such a great alteration in its beating the very moment he

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began speaking on the subject, that often he would go away from me terrified and weeping. Wherefore, one day, seeing his great unhappiness, though the fever was still upon me, I begged one of my sisters to bring me a flute, since it was the least fatiguing instrument of all, and did me no hurt. Then I played with so fine a touch of hand and lips that my father, coming in suddenly, blessed me a thousand times, and said he thought I had made great progress while I had been away. And he begged me to go on, and not to let so fine a talent run to waste.

xii. As soon as I was well again I returned to my friend Marcone, the honest goldsmith, who gave me such good wages I was able to help my father and the rest of my family. About this time there arrived in Florence a sculptor called Piero Torrigiani. He had come from England, where he had lived for many years. Now he was a great friend of my master and paid him a visit every day ; and having seen my designs and my work, he said to me, "I have come to Florence to pick up as many young men as I can, for I have a great work in hand for my king, and I want the help of my own Florentines. Now your method of working and designing pertains more to sculpture than to the goldsmith's art ; so while you are helping me with a great work in bronze I have undertaken, I will make you both a skilful artist and a wealthy man." This Torrigiani was singularly handsome, with a bold bearing, and the air rather of a great soldier than of a sculptor, especially having regard to his commanding gestures and his fine sounding voice ; while his frown was enough to scare the bravest. And every day he would tell us of his ruffling it with those beasts of Englishmen. Now in talking of his adventures, he fell to speaking of Michel Agnolo Buonarroti, led to this by a drawing I had made from a cartoon of that most

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divine master. This cartoon was the first work in which Michel Agnolo displayed his great genius to the full ; and he made it in competition with another, namely Leonardo da Vinci. Both were for the Council Chamber of the Palace of the Signory. The subject was the taking of Pisa by the Florentines ; and the admirable Leonardo da Vinci had chosen to delineate a skirmish of horse-soldiers, with a capture of standards, all as divinely drawn as you can imagine. Michel Agnolo Buonarroti in his represented a company of infantry bathing in the Arno, for it was summer time ; and he showed them just as there had sounded a call to arms, and the naked soldiers were running to the fight. So finely were the actions pourtrayed that neither amongst the ancients nor the moderns has ever been seen a work that reached so high a point of excellence. And so likewise, as I have said, the great Leonardo's was of marvellous beauty. One of these cartoons was placed in the Medici Palace and one in the Pope's Hall ; and while they could be seen there, they were the school of all the world. Although the divine Michel Agnolo afterwards decorated the great chapel of Pope Julius, he never came near that height again ; never again did his genius attain to the power of those early studies.

xiii. And now to return to Piero Torrigiani, who, holding my drawing in his hand, spoke thus : "Buonarroti and I, when we were lads, used to go to the Church of the Carmine to study in the chapel of Masaccio. Now Buonarroti had a habit of teasing all the rest of us who were drawing there ; and one day in particular he was annoying me, and I was more vexed than usual ; so I stretched out my hand and dealt him such a blow on the nose that I felt the bone and the cartilage yield under my fist as if they had been made of crisp wafer. And so he'll go with my mark upon him to his dying day." These

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words roused such loathing in me—for I had ever before my eyes the works of the divine Michel Agnolo—that not only did I refuse to go with him to England, but I could not bear the sight of the man. While I was in Florence I took as my pattern the fine style of Michel Agnolo, and from that I have never wavered.

In those days I was bound in close friendship with a charming young man of my own age, and was much in his company. He also was a goldsmith. His name was Francesco, and he was the son of Filippo, son of Fra Filippo, the most excellent painter. Our companionship bred so great an affection in us that we were never apart night or day. Then, too, his house was still full of fine studies from the hand of his distinguished father. Several books of these were there, taken from the splendid antiquities of Rome, and when I set eyes on them I also became enamoured of them. So for about two years we were the closest friends.

At this time I made a low-relief in silver as big as a little child's hand. It was meant for the buckle of a man's belt, for they were then worn of that size. Carved on it was a cluster of leaves after the antique, with heads of cherubs and other charming masks. This work I made in the shop of one Francesco Salimbene. When it was shown about among the members of the goldsmith's guild, they boasted of me as the best young artist in the trade. Now there was a certain Giovanbatista, commonly known as Tasso, a wood-carver, a young man of my own age ; and one day he said to me that if I cared to go to Rome, he would willingly come with me. This talk we had together was just after dinner, and being angry with my father—music was as ever the cause—I said to Tasso, “Oh, but you're a man of words, not of deeds.” Whereupon Tasso answered, “I, too, am on bad terms with my mother ; and if only

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I had the wherewithal to take me to Rome, I'd never go back to turn the key on that wretched little shop of mine." To this I said that if he was only staying for that, I had on me as much as would take us both to Rome. So, talking all the time, we found ourselves at the gate of San Piero Gattolini before we knew where we were. Whereupon I said, "Tasso, my friend, it is God's doing our reaching this gate unawares. But now that I am here I feel as if I had gone half-way." And so it was agreed ; and as we went upon our road we said, "Oh, what will our old folks say to-night ?" Then we made a pact together not to think more about them till we had got to Rome. So, tying our aprons behind, we set off for Siena, with hardly a word to each other by the way. Having reached there, Tasso said his feet hurt him, and that he would rather not come farther ; and he asked me to lend him money to return. To which I answered, "There would not be enough left for me to go on with, so you should have thought well before you left Florence ; but if it be because of your feet you stop behind, we shall find a return-horse bound for Rome, and then you'll have no excuse." So I hired a horse ; but as he gave me no answer, I betook myself towards the Roman gate. Seeing that I had made up my mind, he limped along as well as he could, slowly and far behind me, and grumbling all the time. As soon as I had reached the gate I felt pity for my companion ; so I waited for him and set him on the crupper, saying, "What would our friends say of us to-morrow if, having left them to go to Rome, we had not the spirit to get past Siena ?" Then my good Tasso confessed I spoke the truth ; and as he was a cheerful fellow, he began to laugh and sing ; and so, singing and laughing all the time, we made our way to Rome. I was just nineteen years old then, and so was the century.

As soon as we reached Rome I placed myself in a

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workshop under a master called Firenzuola. His own name was Giovanni, but he came from Firenzuola in Lombardy, and he was a noted maker of plate, working generally at things on a large scale. When I let him have a glance at the design of the clasp I had made in Florence with Salimbene, he was greatly pleased, and turning to one of his apprentices, a Florentine, Giannotto Giannotti by name, who had been with him several years, he said, "Here is one of the Florentines who know, and you are one of their incapable fools." At that moment I recognised Giannotto, and hastened to say a word to him ; for before he went to Rome we used often to draw together, and we had been on most intimate terms. But he was so mortified by the words his master had thrown at him that he declared he did not recognise me, nor know who I was. Indignant at his saying such a thing, I burst out, "O Giannotto, once mine own familiar friend ! Have we not often been together in such and such places ? Have we not drawn together, and eaten, drunk, and slept in your villa ? Yet I do not care whether you speak for me or not to this good man your master ; for I hope that, without any help from you, my own hands will bear witness as to who I am."

xiv. When I had ended, Firenzuola, who was a most impulsive and fiery man, turned to Giannotto and said to him, "O you vile rascal ! Aren't you ashamed to behave like that to one who has been so close a comrade ?" And with the same impetuosity he wheeled round to me and spoke—"Come into the shop, and do as you have said : let your hands bear witness to the man you are." Then he set me to work on a very beautiful silver piece for a cardinal. This was a little box copied from the porphyry sarcophagus which stands at the door of the Rotonda. Not content merely to copy the design, I enriched it with some charming masks done all out of my

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head ; so that my master went about showing it through all the trade, and boasting of the skilled work that came out of his shop. It was about the size of half a cubit, and was meant for a salt-cellar for the table. This brought me the first of my earnings in Rome. Part of the money I sent to help my dear father ; the rest served to keep me while I went round studying the antiquities, till, my money coming to an end, I had to go back and work in the shop. My friend Batista del Tasso had not been long in Rome when he returned to Florence. I took new works in hand ; but the desire came upon me, as soon as I should have finished them, to change my master, being cajoled thereto by a certain Milan man called Maestro Pagolo Arsago. But Firenzuola, my first master, had hot words with this same Arsago, flinging insults at him in my presence ; whereupon I took up the cudgels for the latter, telling Firenzuola I was born free, and that free I would live ; that of Arsago he had no reason to complain, and still less of me, for some crowns were owing to me for my wages ; that as a free craftsman I should go wherever it pleased me, and doing so I wronged no one. Then my new master took up the word, saying he had never asked me to come, and that I should be doing him a pleasure if I were to return to Firenzuola. To this I retorted that I could not see I was doing him any wrong whatsoever, and that having finished the works I had begun, I wanted to be my own man and no one else's ; and whoever wanted me might come and seek me. To which Firenzuola answered, "I'll not come and seek your services. And don't show your face here again on any account." When I reminded him of my money he laughed at me ; whereupon I said that well as I had worked at the making of those things he had seen, I should handle the sword no less well in the recovery of my rights. Now as we were disputing

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in this fashion, an old man chanced to come up to us, Messer Antonio da San Marino by name. He was the foremost of the goldsmiths of Rome, and had been Firenzuola's master. Hearing my case, which I stated plainly for their comprehension, he immediately took my part, and ordered Firenzuola to pay me. The quarrel grew fierce, for indeed Firenzuola shone more as a swordsman than as a goldsmith. Still justice made its way, though I helped its victory by my firm determination, so that I was paid at last. Some time after, the said Firenzuola and I became friends again ; and at his request I was godfather to a child of his.

xv. Continuing to work with Messer Pagolo Arsago, I earned good wages, and I always sent the bigger share to my good father. At the end of two years, moved by his prayers, I went back to Florence, and set myself once more to work with Francesco Salimbene. With him I earned a very fair amount, and gave my mind to learning more of my art. I renewed my acquaintance with Francesco di Filippo ; and though I was much given to pleasure, drawn thereto by that accursed music, I always kept certain hours of the day and night free for study. About this time I made a silver heart-key—for so were such things called in those days—which was a belt three fingers broad, to be worn by a bride. It was worked in half-relief, with some little figures in the round ; and I made it for a man called Raffaello Lapaccini. Although I was very badly paid for it, the honour I gained came to more than the price it might fairly have brought me. By this time I had worked with many different persons in Florence, and had made the acquaintance of some honest men among the goldsmiths. Such an one was Marcone, my first master. But I knew others who had the name of honest men, yet who did their utmost against me in my work, and cheated me whenever they could.

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Perceiving this I kept aloof from them, holding them as scoundrelly thieves. But one of the goldsmiths, called Giovan Battista Sogliani, kindly obliged me with a part of his shop, which was at the corner of the New Market, hard by the Landi's Bank. There I completed many fine pieces, and, making good earnings, was able to be of real service to my family. But my success roused the envy of some of those villains I had once had to do with, namely, Salvadore and Michele Guasconti, who owned three large goldsmith's shops, and did a deal of business. When, therefore, I saw that they bore me ill will, I laid my complaint before an honest man, saying they might be well content to have robbed me, as they had done under the cloak of pretended kindness. This coming to their ears, they boasted they would make me finely repent of my words ; but I, not knowing the colour of fear, minded their threats hardly at all.

xvi. It happened one day I was leaning up against the shop of one of them. He called out to me, and began to speak in a half-scolding, half-bullying tone. I answered that if they had done their duty towards me I should have spoken of them as men of worth and honour are spoken of ; since they had done the contrary, they should blame themselves and not me. While I stood there talking, one of the family, their cousin, called Gherardo Guasconti—perhaps at their instigation—waited till there came by a beast of burden with a load of bricks ; and when the beast was just opposite, shoved it on me with such force that I was much hurt. Turning suddenly and seeing that he was laughing, I dealt him such a blow with my fist on his temple that he fell in a dead faint. Then facing his cousin, I said, "That's what thieves and cowards of your sort get." They made as if to attack me, for they were numerous enough, and I whose blood was boiling, put my hand on a little knife I had, and roared, "If one of you dares come out of the shop,

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the other can run for the priest : there will be nothing left for the doctor to do ! ” Such terror did these words strike into them that not one of them moved to their cousin’s aid. I had no sooner gone than the father and sons ran to the Eight, and told how I had attacked them with a sword in their shop, an unheard of thing in Florence. So the Eight Signors had me summoned ; and I appeared before them. They reproved me severely—perhaps because they saw me in a cloak, while the others wore their citizen’s mantle and hood ; but also because my enemies had gone to those signors’ houses to speak to them privately, and I, being inexperienced, had spoken to nobody, trusting solely in my own good cause. I pleaded that when Gherardo had grossly insulted me, I had been greatly moved to anger, yet did but give him a box on the ear ; and thus it did not seem to me I deserved so sharp a rebuke.

Hardly had Prinzivalle della Stufa, who was of the Eight, heard me utter the word “ box on the ear,” than he said, “ It was a blow you gave him : you did not box his ears.” Then the bell was rung, and we were all sent out. In my defence Prinzivalle said to the company, “ Consider, my lords, the simplicity of this poor fellow, who accuses himself of having boxed the other’s ears, thinking it a less offence than a blow ; for the penalty of the former in the New Market is five and twenty crowns, and that of a blow little or nothing at all. He is a very clever young man, and generously maintains his own poor family by his work. Would to God that our city had many of his kind, instead of lacking them as it does ! ”

xvii. Among the Eight were some Puritan fellows, with the tails of their hoods twisted up ; and they, moved by the appeals and the lying tales of my enemies, and also because they were of Fra Girolamo’s faction, would willingly have sent me to prison, and condemned me without mercy. But good Prinzivalle

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prevented that. So they let me off with a fine of four bushels of flour to be given in alms to the Murate Convent. As soon as we were called in, he ordered me not to speak a word under pain of their displeasure, and to obey the sentence they had passed. Then administering to me a sharp rebuke, they sent us to the Chancellor, I grumbling all the time, "It was a box on the ear, not a blow," so that we left the Eight laughing heartily. The Chancellor, on the part of the magistrates, ordered us both to find security ; but only I was condemned to pay the four bushels of flour. I felt outraged ; nevertheless, I sent for one of my cousins, who was called Maestro Annibale the surgeon, the father of Messer Librodoro Librodori, begging him to stand security for me. But he would not come. At this I was furious, and in my rage I swelled like an asp, and resolved on a desperate thing. Here may verily be seen how the stars do not so much influence as compel our ways. When I thought under what obligations Annibale lay to our house, my anger grew to such a degree that I let my evil passion have its way—and then, too, by nature I am somewhat choleric. Thus I waited till the company of the Eight had gone to dinner ; and then, left to myself, and seeing that none of them had their eye on me, I went out of the palace in a fever of rage, and ran home to my shop. There I picked up a stiletto, and rushed to my enemies' house, which was above their shop. I found them at table ; and young Gherardo, who had been the beginning of the quarrel, threw himself upon me at my entrance. Thereupon I stabbed him in the breast, right through his doublet and vest to his shirt, but did not touch his flesh, nor do him any injury whatsoever. Only, seeing the dagger disappear, and hearing the tearing of his clothes, I thought I had wounded him sorely ; and, as he fell from sheer terror to the ground, I shouted, "O traitors,

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this is the day appointed unto me to murder you all ! ” The father, mother, and sisters, thinking that it was the Day of Judgment, threw themselves at once on their knees, calling for mercy with all their lungs. Seeing they made no resistance, and looking at the the man stretched out on the floor like a corpse, I felt it would be too vile a thing to lay hands on them. But, still furious, I rushed to the stairs and, having reached the street, I found all the rest of the household assembled there, more than a dozen in all. One had an iron shovel, another carried a big iron pipe, others hammers, anvils, and sticks. Like a mad bull I rushed into their midst, knocked down four or five of them, and fell with them, but dealing dagger-thrusts all the time, now here, now there. Those who kept their feet pressed in on me as hard as they could, having at me with both hands with their hammers, their anvils, and their cudgels. But as God in his mercy sometimes intervenes, it so pleased Him that they did not do me, nor did I do them, the very least harm in the world. Only my cap was left on the field, and that my enemies bore off, each of them digging at it with his weapon—though they had fought shy of it before. Then they looked among their company for the dead and wounded ; and, lo, every man of them was safe and sound !

xviii. I was on the road to Santa Maria Novella when I suddenly hit up against Frate Alessio Strozzi, whom I did not know. Yet I begged this good brother, for the love of God, to save my life, for I had committed a great crime. The honest friar told me to fear nothing ; that though I had done all the evil in the world, in his little cell I should be altogether safe. Nearly an hour passed, and the Eight, who had been called together for an extraordinary sitting, sent out one of the most terrible proclamations against me that ever was heard, and threatened the severest penalties against whoever

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should shelter me or know of my whereabouts, without regard to the place, or to the quality of him who should give me refuge. My poor afflicted father ran to the Eight, threw himself on his knees before them, and begged mercy for his unhappy young son. Then stood up one of those fanatics, and tossing the crest of his twisted hood, spoke these insulting words to the poor old man, "Get up," he said, "and out with you! For to-morrow morning we shall send him out of town by the lances." Then my father answered haughtily, "What God has ordained, that shall you do, and nothing more"; whereupon the man answered that of a certainty God had so ordained. And my father replied, "I comfort myself with the thought that you have no knowledge of what shall happen." Leaving them, he came in search of me, along with a youth of my own age, Piero, the son of Giovanni Landi. We loved each other better than if we had been brothers. This young man carried under his mantle a magnificent sword and a splendid coat of mail. Having found me, my brave father told me how things were, and what the Eight had said to him. Then he kissed me on the forehead and on the two eyes, and blessed me from his heart, saying, "The strength of God be your aid!" Bringing me the sword and armour, he helped me with his own hands to put them on. And said he, "O my good son, armed with these you live or die." Pier Landi, who was with us, could not stop weeping. He gave me ten golden crowns; and I asked him to pluck out some hairs from my chin, the first traces of my beard. Then Frate Alesso dressed me like a friar, and sent a lay brother along with me as guide. Leaving the convent, I went out of the city by the Prato gate and along the walls till I came to the Piazza of San Gallo; and having climbed the Montui hill, I found in one of the first houses a man called Grassuccio,

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brother to Messer Benedetto da Monte Varchi. Off I threw my frock, and was a man again. Then my companion and I mounted the two horses waiting for us, and went away through the night to Siena. There Grassuccio left me, returned to Florence, saluted my father, and told him I had reached safety. My father rejoiced greatly thereat ; and he could hardly wait till he found that one of the Eight who had girded at him. Finding him at last, he said, "Do you see, Antonio, that it was God who knew what should befall my son, and not you ?" "Wait till we catch him again," said the other ; and my father rejoined, "In the meanwhile I will give my mind to thanking God who has saved him now."

xix. At Siena I waited for the courier to Rome, and went along with him. When we had passed the Paglia, we met the messenger who carried the news of the election of the new Pope, Clement VII. Once at Rome, I set to work in Maestro Santi the goldsmith's shop. Although Santi was dead, one of his sons kept on the place ; but he did not work himself, and all the business was carried on by a young man, called Luca Agnolo of Jesi, a peasant, who had come as quite a little lad to work with Maestro Santi. This Luca Agnolo was short of stature, but well proportioned. He worked more skilfully than any man I had ever seen till then, with the greatest ease, too, and with infinite fancy, but only on large pieces, on fine vases, basins, and such like things. Setting to work in this shop, I took in hand some candlesticks for a Spaniard, the Bishop of Salamanca. These candlesticks were as richly worked as such things can be. Now, there was a pupil of Raffaello da Urbino, called Gianfrancesco, nicknamed Il Fattore. He was a great friend of this bishop, and got me into his good graces, too, so that I obtained a great many commissions from the dignitary, and made a very good living. In

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those days I used to go and draw, now in the chapel of Michel Agnolo, and now in the house of Agostino Chigi, the Sienese, where there were a great many beautiful paintings from the hand of the most excellent Raffaello of Urbino. There I went on holidays, for Gismondo, brother of Messer Agostino Chigi, lived in the palace ; and they were very proud when young men of my standing were seen studying in their houses. The wife of Messer Gismondo had often seen me there—a most noble lady was she, and of wonderful beauty—and so one day she approached me, and, looking at my drawings, asked me if I were a sculptor or a painter. I answered the lady that I was a goldsmith. Whereupon she said that I drew too well for a goldsmith ; and she ordered one of her maids to fetch a lily of wonderful diamonds set in gold. Showing it to me, she begged me to price it. I estimated the value to be eight hundred crowns, and she told me that I had valued it very exactly. Then she asked me if I had a mind to contrive a fine new setting for it. "Right willingly," said I ; and there and then drew a little sketch of the design. And my skill was the greater for my pleasure in dealing with this lovely and most pleasant lady. When I had finished the design, in came another noble Roman lady, who was also very beautiful. She had been upstairs, and now, coming down, she asked Madonna Porzia what she was doing, who answered, smiling, "I am amusing myself in watching this worthy young man at his drawing, for he is both honest and comely." By this time I had summoned up some boldness, yet was it still mixed with a trifle of shy modesty, and I blushed as I said, "Whatever I am, Madonna, I shall ever be most ready for your service." The lady also reddened a little as she added, "You know well that I desire your service," and handing me the lily, told me to take it away. Moreover, she gave me twenty gold crowns which she had in her

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pocket, saying, "Set the jewel for me according to the design you have made, and return to me the old gold of its present setting." Then the other Roman lady said, "If I were in that young man's shoes, I'd soon make off with it." Whereupon Madonna Porzia rejoined that virtues rarely exist alongside vices, and that if I were to do such a thing I should much belie my honest face. Then, turning away, she took the Roman gentlewoman's hand and said, with a pleasant smile, "Adieu, Benvenuto!" I stopped for some time busy on the drawing I had in hand, which was a copy of a figure of Jupiter by Raffaello of Urbino. As soon as I had finished I set off for home, and began to make a little model of wax, to show how the thing would look in the end. This I took to Madonna Porzia. The Roman lady who had been there before was again present, and both, greatly pleased with my labours, showed me such favour that, gathering some boldness, I promised them the work should be twice as good as the model. Then I set about the thing, and in twelve days I had finished the lily-shaped jewel, adorning it with little masks, cherubs, animals, all of them charmingly enamelled, so that the diamonds which made the lily looked ever so much better than before.

xx. Now while I was working at this piece, that clever Lucagnolo, of whom I have spoken above, showed his strong disapproval of me; and many a time did he tell me that I would earn much more profit and honour by helping him to make great silver vases, as I had done in the beginning. To this I replied that I should be capable of making these whenever I had a mind; but as for the kind of thing I was doing, it did not come in one's way every day; that it was no less honourable than what he proposed, and a great deal more profitable. At this Lucagnolo laughed, saying, "Let's wait and see, Benvenuto. By the time you have finished your work I shall endeavour

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to have finished the vase I began at the same time as you did the jewel ; and experience will prove to you what profit I draw from my work, and what can be made from yours.” It was a great pleasure, I replied, to engage in such a contest with so able a man as he, and in the end it would be seen which of us was mistaken. And so both of us, smiling somewhat disdainfully at each other, set our faces proudly to our tasks, and so eager were we for their completion, that at the end of ten days we had each finished our own with great skill and elegance. Lucagnolo’s was a very large vase designed for the table of Pope Clement, into which at dinner-time were thrown bones and the rinds of fruits. It was made rather for display than necessity. The vase was adorned with two fine handles, with masks both big and little, and clumps of beautiful foliage, and all worked with such perfect grace and art that I declared it to be the finest thing of the kind I had ever seen. Whereupon Lucagnolo, thinking he had convinced me of my mistake, said, “ Your own work seems just as beautiful to me ; but soon we shall see the difference between them.” So, taking up his vase, he carried it to the Pope, who was entirely satisfied with it, and ordered him to be paid at once according to the standard of payment for works on that scale. Meanwhile I took my jewel to the lady, Madonna Porzia, who was altogether astonished, and said I had far surpassed the promise I had made her. Then she went on to say I might ask whatever I liked for my pains, for to her mind my deserts were such that, were she to give me a castle, she would hardly think me paid. But since that she could not give me, she continued with a smile, I must ask something within her means. To this I replied that I could imagine no better reward than to have satisfied her ladyship. Then I, too, smiling, made her a reverence and took my leave, saying I desired no other recompense. Thereat

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Madonna Porzia turned to the Roman lady, and said, "See you, those virtues we believed to be in him keep good company, and have no dealings with vice." And both of them were astonished. Then said Madonna Porzia, "Benvenuto, my friend, have you never heard the saying that when the poor man gives to the rich, the Devil laughs?" Whereupon I answered, "Well, he has a deal of trouble, and for once I'd like to see him merry;" but she rejoined, as I was going away, that on this occasion she had no desire to do him any such good turn. When I got back to my shop, Lucagnolo had the money for his vase in a little packet, and when I came in he said, "Now, as a test, put your earnings for the jewel side by side with mine from the vase." But I asked him to keep his money intact till next day. Then, inasmuch as my work was, of its kind, no less fine than his, I hoped to convince him so would be its reward.

xxi. Next day Madonna Porzia sent her steward to my shop. He called me outside, and put into my hand a paper cornet full of money from his mistress, with a message that she did not wish the Devil to have all the fun; and explaining that what she had sent was not the full payment which my labours deserved—with many other courtesies of speech befitting such a lady. Lucagnolo, to whom it seemed a thousand years till he might compare his packet with mine, that very instant dashed into the shop, where a dozen workmen and neighbours were gathered, all eager to see the upshot of the contest. Taking up his packet with a scornful laugh, and saying, "Ou! ou!" over and over again, he poured the money noisily out on the counter. There were five-and-twenty giulio crowns, and he thought to himself that my payment might come to four or five crowns *di moneta*. Hardly able to endure his cries, the mocking glances and the laughing of the by-

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standers, I gave a peep into my parcel, and saw that there was nothing in it but gold. So going to one end of the counter, keeping my eyes cast down the while, as quietly as possible I raised my packet high with both my hands, and made the money run out as if from a mill-hopper. Mine was twice as much as his ; so that all the bystanders, who had been fixing somewhat disdainful eyes on me, now turned on him with cries of, "Lucagnolo, Benvenuto's coins are gold, and twice as many as yours, and they make a much better show !" I thought that from envy and shame the poor fellow would have fallen dead there and then. And though a third part of my money would come to him, for I was but his workman—and such is the custom that the workman receives two-thirds and the rest goes to the master of the shop—yet wild envy was stronger in him than avarice, though it should have been just the opposite, seeing that Lucagnolo was the son of a peasant of Jesi. Now he cursed his own art and those who had taught it to him, saying that from this time forward he would work no more at these big things, but would give himself entirely to silly toys like mine, since they were so well paid. I, not a whit less angry, remarked that every bird sang its own song, and that his speech reeked of the low shanty he was born in. I stoutly maintained that I could succeed admirably in turning out such clumsy rubbish as his, while he would never attain to skill in my dainty toys. Then I left him in a rage, promising to prove my words ere long. The bystanders blamed him loudly, looking on him as the boor he was, and holding me for the man I had shown myself to be.

xxii. Next day I went to thank Madonna Porzia. But I told her ladyship she had done just the contrary of what she had said ; for I had wished to make the Devil merry, and she had made him once more deny God. And so we laughed together pleasantly ;

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and she gave me other fine and important pieces of work to do for her.

In the meanwhile, through a pupil of Raffaello of Urbino the painter, I got a commission from the Bishop of Salamanca to make a great water-pot, of the kind called *acquereccia*, which serve as sideboard ornaments. The bishop wished to have two made of the same size, and commissioned Lucagnolo to make one, and me the other ; and for the moulding of the vases we got a design from the painter Gianfrancesco, whom I have just mentioned.

So I took the vase in hand with all the energy possible ; and a Milan man, called Maestro Giovani-piero della Tasca, was good enough to give me a corner of his shop to work in. There I made my preparations, calculated the money I should need for some affairs I had in hand, and all the rest I sent to succour my good father. When he was on his way to cash it in Florence, he chanced on that fanatic who had been of the Eight when I had got into that little trouble, the very man who had insulted him by saying I was, of a certainty, going to be sent into the country with the lances. Now this fanatic had worthless sons, and so my father said to him, "Any man may get into trouble, especially a hot-tempered one, if he feel himself to be in the right, as my son did. But look at the rest of his life, and see how virtuously I have brought him up. I pray God in your behalf that your sons behave neither better nor worse to you than mine do to me. For God has enabled me to train them well ; and when my own strength could not avail, He Himself saved them for me out of your violent hands, and that when you least expected it." And so leaving him, my father went and wrote all this to me, begging me for the love of God to play sometimes on my flute, and not waste the fine art which he had been at such pains to teach me. The letter was full of the most loving

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and fatherly words imaginable ; so that it moved me to pious tears, and filled me with the desire that, before he died, I might satisfy him fully on the count of music. So does God grant us all the lawful desires which we ask of Him in faith.

xxiii. While I was hard at work on Salamanca's fine vase I had as my sole help a little lad, whom, at the earnest prayers of friends, and half against my own will, I had taken as apprentice. This child, who was about fourteen years old, was called Paolino, and he was the son of a Roman citizen, who lived on his rents. He was the best bred, the most honest, and the handsomest boy I have ever seen in my life ; and for his modest ways and habits, his wonderful beauty, and the great affection he bore me, I loved him with all the love the heart of man can hold. This tenderness drew me once more to music, that I might sit and watch his lovely face, naturally so modest and so melancholy, lighten at the sound. For when I took up my cornet, there dawned there a smile so charming and so beautiful that I in nowise wonder at those fables which the Greeks wrote of the divine gods. Indeed, had Paolino lived in those days, perhaps he would have set them fabling still more extravagantly. Now Paolino had a sister called Faustina ; and I think that the other Faustina, of whom there is such a talk in the ancient books, never was so fair. Sometimes he brought me home to their vineyard, and, so far as I could judge, that worthy man, his father, would have willingly had me for his son-in-law. All this made me play a great deal more than I had been doing. It happened at that time that a certain Giangiacomo, a fifer from Cesena, who was in the Pope's household, and a most admirable musician, sent word to me by Lorenzo, the trumpeter from Lucca—who to-day is in the service of our Duke—asking if I would help them for the Pope's Ferragosto by playing the soprano part on my cornet in

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certain lovely movements they had chosen for that day. Although I had the greatest desire to finish the fine vase I had begun, yet, since music has a marvellous power, and also that I might give some satisfaction to my old father, I consented to play in their company. So for eight days before the Ferragosto, and every day for two hours, we rehearsed together. Then on the appointed day in August we went to the Belvedere, and while Pope Clement dined we played our well-rehearsed movements in such a fashion that the Pope declared he had never heard music more sweetly played, or more harmoniously. Calling Giangiacomo to him, he asked him where and how he had managed to procure so good a soprano cornet, and inquired most minutely who I was. Giangiacomo told him my name with all exactness, to which the Pope rejoined, "So he is the son of Maestro Giovanni?" And he was told that it was so. Then the Pope said he wished to have me in his service among the other musicians. But Giangiacomo replied, "Most holy father, I have no hope of procuring him for you; for his profession, to which he gives the whole of his time, is the goldsmith's art, wherein he works with wonderful skill, drawing from it much more profit than he would from music." Then said the Pope, "I want him all the more for his having a talent over and above the one I looked for. Settle on him the same salary you others have, and tell him from me to enter my service, and that I will give him quite enough daily employment in his other profession." Then he handed him a hundred gold crowns of the Camera in a handkerchief, saying, "Divide them so that he may have his share." Giangiacomo left the Pope and came and told me exactly all that his Holiness had said to him. Then he divided the money among the eight of us; and as he gave me my share said, "I am going to inscribe you in the number of our com-

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pany." To which I answered, "Leave it for to-day ; and to-morrow I shall give you the answer." When I left them, I went on my way wondering if I should accept the proposal, knowing how harmful it would be, were I distracted from the great studies of my art. The night following, my father appeared to me in a dream, and with most loving tears, begged me for the love of God and of himself, to consent. In my dream I seemed to answer him that I would have nothing to do with it. Then suddenly I saw him in horrible guise, so that I was terrified, and he said, " If you refuse, your father's curse shall rest upon you. If you consent, you shall ever be blessed of me." Waking up, in sheer fright I ran and had my name put down ; and then I wrote to my old father, who, out of his excessive joy, fell into a sickness which brought him to the verge of death. But before long he wrote me that he, too, had had almost the same dream as myself.

xxiv. Now I had satisfied the modest wish of my dear father, methought all my affairs should advance to an honoured and glorious fulfilment. So I set myself with the greatest energy to finish the vase which I had begun for Salamanca. This bishop was a wonderful man, very rich, but most difficult to satisfy. Every day he sent to see what I had done ; and every time his messenger did not find me, Salamanca fell into the greatest fury, swearing that he would take away the work from me and give it to another to finish. And that damnable music was at the root of all the mischief. Still, with the greatest application I kept at the thing by day and by night ; and when it reached a point where it might be shown, I took it to the bishop. But this only whetted his desire to see it finished, and I repented having let him get a sight of it. At the end of three months I had completed the thing, having worked on it all the loveliest little animals and leaves

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and figures you can imagine. Without delay I sent it by the hands of my boy Paolino to that clever man Lucagnolo, of whom I have spoken above. And Paolino, with his infinite grace and beauty, spake thus : "Messer Lucagnolo, Benvenuto, mindful of his promises, sends you this as a sample of his work in your own gross manner, hoping that you have some of his own silly toys to show him in return." When he had made an end, Lucagnolo took the vase in his hands, and looking at it long, he said to Paolino, "My pretty boy, tell your master that he is a very clever man, and that I beg him to be my friend ; and let's forget the past." And very gladly did the modest and charming boy bring back the message. When the vase was taken home, Salamanca wished it to be valued. At this valuation Lucagnolo was present, and he estimated it very high, praising it far above my own opinion of it. Then taking it in his hands, Salamanca, in true Spanish fashion, said, "I swear to God that I will put off paying him just as long as he has made me wait for it." Hearing this I was very ill pleased, and cried a murrain upon Spain and whoever wished it well.

Among its other fine ornaments, the vase had a handle all of a piece, and most elaborately contrived, which, by means of a spring, would stand right above the mouth. One day Monsignor, from sheer vanity, was showing the vase to some Spanish gentlemen ; and when his back was turned, one of them touched the handle very carelessly, and the delicate spring, which was not made to stand such clumsiness, broke in his hand. Seeing the damage he had done, he begged the butler who had charge of it to take it at once to the master who had made it, that it might be repaired without delay, promising any price that might be asked, if only it could be mended at once. Having got the vase back into my hands, I gave the desired promise, and repaired the thing. It had been

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brought to me before dinner, and two hours before sundown the messenger came back all of a sweat from having run the whole way, Monsignor having asked for it again to show to some other gentlemen. Indeed, the butler did not let me utter a word with his "Quick, quick ! Let's have the vase." Whereupon I determined to take my own time, and not to let it out of my hands. So I said I was in no hurry to give it up. Then the servant got into a terrible fury, and made as if to pull out his sword with one hand, and with the other to force his way into the shop. But this at once I put a stop to with my own weapon, crying fiercely to him the while, "I shall not give it you. Go and tell Monsignor your master that I want the money for my work before it goes out of this shop." The man, seeing nothing was to be gained by bullying, began to beseech me as if he were appealing to the Cross, promising that if only I would give it to him he would see after the payment. But these words turned me not at all from my purpose, and I only repeated what I had said. At last, despairing of the business, he swore he would come with a great band of Spaniards and cut me in pieces. Then off he went running ; while I, who thought there might be something in this threat of their assassinating me, determined bravely to defend my life. So I loaded an excellent little fowling-piece which I used for sport, saying to myself, "Who robs me of my goods and my labours may take my life as well." While I was arguing the matter with myself, up came a band of Spaniards headed by their majordomo, who with Spanish insolence ordered them to go in, take away the vase, and give me a good drubbing. Hearing this, I pointed my loaded gun at them, and shouted "Infidels ! Traitors ! Do you dare thus attack houses and shops in a great city like Rome ? As many of you thieves as come near this door I will shoot dead with this gun !" And

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taking aim at their leader, and making as if to draw the trigger, I cried, "And you, you thief, who are egging them on, you shall be the first to fall." Whereupon he stuck his spurs into his jennet and made off as hard as he could. All the neighbours rushed out at the noise ; and some Roman gentlemen who were passing, cried, "Knock these infidels down ! We're on your side." These words were said in such good earnest that the Spaniards took to flight ; and they were forced to tell the whole affair to Monsignor. He, being a very haughty man, rated all those servants and officers of his soundly for having gone to such an extreme, and also for not having seen the thing through once they had begun it. Just then the painter who had had to do with the affair came in ; and Monsignor bade him go and tell me that, if I did not bring the vase at once, there would not be much left of me after he had finished ; but that if I returned it he would pay me promptly. This did not frighten me in the least, and I let him know I should go straight and tell the Pope. However, his wrath and my fear both somewhat passed off ; and certain great Roman noblemen gave me their word that the bishop would not injure me. And having the assurance, too, of being paid for my work, I provided myself with a great dagger, put on my coat of mail, and arrived at Monsignor's house. All his household were assembled when I entered, Paolino after me, carrying the silver vase. It was like nothing more or less than passing through the Zodiac—for one was like a lion, another like a scorpion, and another like a crab—till at last we reached the presence of that scoundrelly prelate, who sputtered out all the priestly Spanish rubbish you can imagine. But I never raised my head to look at him, nor answered ever a word, at which his anger seemed to grow. Then telling them to bring me writing materials, he ordered me to write with my



POPE CLEMENT VII. AND THE EMPEROR CHARLES V.
Vasari. Florence, Palazzo Vecchio.

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own hand that I was well satisfied with his payment of me. At that I raised my head and said right willingly would I do so, when I had seen the colour of his money. The bishop fumed with rage, and insults and abuse rained thick. But in the end I got my money, wrote the acknowledgment, and, pleased and happy, went my way.

xxv. Later, Pope Clement—who had seen the vase before this, though it was not shown him as my work—heard of the affair. He was much pleased with me, and sang my praises loud, saying publicly that he wished me all success. So Monsignor Salamanca was very sorry for having bullied me as he had done ; and that we might be friends again, he sent me word by the same painter that he would fain give me a great deal of important work to do. To this I replied that I was quite willing ; but should like to be paid in advance. This, too, came to the ears of Pope Clement, and made him laugh heartily. Cardinal Cibo was with him at the time, and the Pope told him the whole story of my dispute with the bishop. Then turning to one of his ministers, he bade him to give me constant employment for the palace. Cardinal Cibo sent for me, and after some pleasant talk, he ordered a vase from me larger than Salamanca's. So did Cardinal Cornaro and many others of the College, especially Ridolfi and Salviati. I had commissions from all of them, so that my earnings were very good. Madonna Porzia, of whom I have already spoken, advised me to open a shop of my own ; and this I did. Indeed, I never stopped working for that noble and most worthy gentlewoman, who paid me handsomely, and to whom I probably owed my chance of showing the world I was good for something. I became very friendly with Signor Gabriele Ceserino, Gonfalonier of Rome ; and for him I did a great deal of work, amongst other notable things a large gold medal to wear in a hat. The engraved design on it

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was Leda with her swan. Being much pleased with my work, he said he would like to have it valued so that I might be fairly paid. But the medal had been made with great skill, and the valuers in the trade put a much higher price on it than he had thought it would cost. And so I kept the medal in my own hands, and got nothing at all for my pains. This affair of the medal turned out very like that of Salamanca's vase ; but that these matters may not take up space which belongs to more important things, I shall pass them over briefly.

xxvi. Even though I break off a little from the story of my professional career, I must—since I am writing my life—tell shortly something of other matters, though not in minute detail. Well, one St. John's morning I was dining with some of my compatriots of diverse professions—painters, sculptors, and goldsmiths. Among the notable men were Rosso the painter, and Gianfrancesco, a pupil of Raffaello of Urbino. There were others, too. I had assembled them at our meeting-place very informally, and we were all laughing and jesting as men will do when they get together to rejoice on such a great festival. Now there happened to pass the house a feather-brained, blustering youth, who was a soldier belonging to the company of Signor Rienzo da Ceri. Hearing our noise he made mock of us, and cast insults on our Florentine nation. Since I was the host of all those distinguished men, it seemed right to take the insults to myself. So quietly, without any one seeing me, I went out and accosted the fellow. He had one of his loose women with him, and he was going on with his ribald jesting to make her laugh. Going up to him, I asked him if it was he had been bold enough to speak ill of the Florentines ; and he flashed back, “Yes, I’m the man.” Hearing which, I up with my hand and struck him in the face, saying, “Well, and I’m the other man.” In a trice each of us had

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out his sword ; but our fight had no sooner begun than people came between us, though most of them took my part rather than his, convinced by what they heard and saw that I was in the right. Next day a challenge from him was brought to me, which I received very gladly, saying this was a thing I could put through much more speedily than anything pertaining to my own business. So without delay I went off to take counsel with a veteran called Bevilacqua, who had the name of being the first swordsman in Italy—for in his time he had fought more than twenty duels, and come out of them all with honour. This worthy man was a great friend of mine. I was known to him as a goldsmith, and, besides, he had been mediator between me and others in certain serious quarrels. So now with right good will he said, “Benvenuto, my friend, if Mars had challenged you, I’m sure you’d come out of the business with honour ; for in all the years I have known you, I have never seen you enter a quarrel without right on your side.” So he undertook my affair. Then we went armed to the appointed place ; but no blood was shed. My enemy sought for peace, and I came out of the thing with great credit. I shall go into no more particulars, for though they would be very interesting of their kind, I shall rather keep my words to speak of my art, which is the thing that has drawn me on to all this scribbling. And about that I have only too much to say.

Although, moved by an honest ambition, I was desirous to do some other work which should be as good as, or even surpass, that of the able man Lucagnolo, yet I never forsook my own delightful jeweller’s art ; so that between one thing and another a great deal of profit and honour accrued to me, and in both arts I worked constantly, copying no man’s designs. In those days there lived in Rome a very clever Perugian, Lautizio by name, who worked only

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in one branch of art, where he was unique in all the world. Now in Rome every cardinal has a seal, on which is stamped his title. These seals are about the size of a twelve-year-old child's hand ; and, as I have just said, the cardinal's title is cut on them along with diverse figure ornaments. For a good seal of the kind a hundred crowns, or even more, would be paid. Now I felt spurred to an honourable rivalry with this man also, though his art was far removed from the goldsmith's business—which, indeed, was the reason why Lautizio knew no other craft save seal-making. So I set myself to practise this one, and although I found it very difficult, yet I never tired of the labour it imposed on me, and gave all my energies to profit and to progress. There was another most excellent and clever man in Rome, who hailed from Milan, Messer Caradosso by name. He worked only at medals chiselled on thin plates and such-like things ; paxes, for instance, in half-relief, and various Christs of the length of your palm, made of the thinnest gold plates, and so skillfully worked that I looked on him as the best master in this line I had ever seen, and envied him more than any one else. Then again there were masters who worked at medals cut in steel, which are patterns and absolute guides to whoever would perfect himself in the art of coin-making. And all those diverse crafts I set myself to learn with the greatest eagerness. Then think of the charming art of enamelling, which I never saw better done by any one than by a Florentine called Amerigo, whom I did not know, but whose marvellous works I was well acquainted with. Nowhere have I seen any one who came near him in genius. And to this kind of work I betook myself with energy, though it is exceedingly difficult, having regard to the fire to which the finished works must be subjected, and which often utterly ruins them. But though I found it no easy matter, yet such pleasure

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did I take in it that its great difficulties were a rest to me. And this sprang from a special gift lent me by the God of Nature, a temperament so healthy and well-proportioned that I could confidently carry out whatever I had made up my mind to do. These arts I have been speaking of are entirely different from one another, so that a man skilled in one of them rarely attains to equal success in any other, whereas I strove with my whole strength after them equally ; and in its own place I shall show that I succeeded.

xxvii. At this time, when I was a young man of twenty-three or thereabouts, so terrible a pestilence broke out that in Rome every day many thousands died of it. Being somewhat afraid, I began to take recreation of a kind to my liking, drawn thereto for a reason which I shall relate. I was in the habit of going on fête days to the ancient monuments, and there making copies, now modelling in wax, and now drawing. As these old places are all in ruins, a great number of pigeons have taken to breed there, and I took it into my head I should like to have a shot at them. So thus, to avoid contact with other people, for I was afraid of the plague, I put my gun on the shoulders of my Paolino, and he and I by ourselves set off for the ruins ; and, as it came about, many a time I returned laden with fine fat pigeons. I never liked loading my gun with more than one ball, so that it was by real marksman's skill I brought down so many. My gun I had made myself, and inside and outside it shone like a mirror. With my own hand, too, I made the finest powder, discovering wonderful secrets, which to this day are unknown to any one else. I will not enlarge on the matter, but just give one hint to astonish skilled sportsmen. It is this—that with a charge a fifth of the weight of my ball, it carried two hundred paces point blank. Now although the great pleasure which I got from

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sport might seem to have distracted me from my art and my studies—and it really did so—yet in another sense it gave me much more than it took away, for every time I went out shooting, my health was much the better for it, the air putting fresh vigour into me. I am naturally of a melancholy temper, but while I was amusing myself in this way I grew light-hearted, and so I worked the better and with more skill than when I had no distraction from my studies and the exercise of my art. Thus in the end my gun was more of a gain than a loss to me.

Besides, while I was engaged in this amusement, I made the acquaintance of some collectors, who followed in the steps of those Lombard peasants who used to come and dig the vineyards in the due season. In turning up the soil they would find antique medals, agates, chrysoprases, cornelians, cameos, and even precious stones like emeralds, sapphires, diamonds, and rubies. The collectors sometimes got such things from the peasants for trifling sums ; and so now and then—indeed frequently—I bought them from the curiosity-hunters for as many golden crowns as they had given guilios. Apart from the considerable gain I drew from the business, tenfold and more, my collection made me welcome amongst not a few of the Roman cardinals. But I shall only mention the most notable and rarest of these treasures. Among many other things there came into my hands a dolphin's head about the size of a big voting-bean. Now though the head was very beautifully fashioned, the material much surpassed the art ; for this emerald was of so lovely a colour that he who bought it from me for a score or so of crowns, had it set for a ring and got hundreds for it. Then there was another thing, namely, a head made out of the finest topaz that ever was seen ; and here the art was as good as the material. It was about the size of a big hazelnut, and the carving of the head of Minerva was as

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exquisite as you can imagine. And then there was still another—a cameo on which was cut Hercules binding the three-headed Cerberus. This was of such extraordinary beauty and artistic skill that our great Michel Agnolo himself said he had never seen so marvellous a thing. Among a great many bronze medals I got hold of one with a head of Jupiter on it. It was larger than any I had ever seen, and the head was fashioned to perfection. On its beautiful reverse were some little figures just as well modelled. I could talk a long time about this, but I will say no more, lest I grow too lengthy.

xxviii. As I have already told, the plague had broken out in Rome. Although I am now about to turn back a little in my story, I shall not be deviating from my plan. There came to Rome a very great surgeon called Maestro Giacomo da Carpi. This clever man, in the course of his other professional duties, took certain desperate cases of the French evil. Now in Rome priests are particularly liable to this disease, especially the richest of them. Well, when this distinguished man became known, he declared he would cure the malady in the most marvellous fashion by means of fumigations. But before beginning a cure he first bargained for his fees, and it was by hundreds and not by tens of crowns that these were reckoned. Now this clever man had a great understanding of the art of design. One day, passing my shop by chance, he saw a collection of drawings I had lying about, among which were some of fantastic little vases I had designed for my own pleasure, entirely different from any that had ever been seen before. Maestro Giacomo wished me to make some for him in silver, and this I did with all the good will in the world, for it fell in with my fancy. Although the distinguished man paid me very well for them, the honour it brought me was a hundred times more; for the best men in the

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goldsmith's trade said they had never seen anything more beautiful or better executed. No sooner had I finished than he showed them to the Pope ; and next day he took his departure. He was very learned, and could speak admirably on the subject of medicine. The Pope wished him to remain in his service ; but Carpi said he would not be in the service of any one in the world, and whoever wanted him might come and seek him. A very shrewd person he was, too, and he did wisely in leaving Rome ; for not many months after, all those whom he had treated were a hundred times worse than before ; and he would have been killed had he stopped. He showed my little vases to many noblemen, amongst others to his Excellency the Duke of Ferrara, telling him how he had got them from a great lord in Rome, to whom he had said, if he would be cured of his malady, he must give him the two vases. The lord had replied that they were antiques, and offered him anything else of a portable size, if he but left him those. Carpi's tale was that he pretended he would not treat him, and then he got his way. This I was told by Messer Alberto Bendedio in Ferrara, who very pompously showed me some terra-cotta copies of them. Whereat I laughed, and as I said nothing, Messer Alberto Bendedio, who was a proud man, flew into a rage and said, " You laugh, eh ? But I tell you that for a thousand years back not a man has come into the world who could do as much as copy them." Then I, so as not to do harm to their reputation, kept my mouth shut, but stood looking at them in dumb wonder. Several noblemen in Rome—some of them my friends—said of these works that they had a marvellously antique look ; and, emboldened by this appreciation, I confessed I was their maker. They refused to believe it ; therefore, in order to retain their credit, I was forced to prove my claim by making the designs for them

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over again ; for my word was not enough, seeing that Maestro Giacomo had shrewdly carried off the old drawings. But I did not come badly out of this little affair.

xxix. Still the plague raged on for many months, but I had kept it at a distance. Many of my comrades had died, yet I remained safe and free from infection. Now it happened one night that one of my intimate acquaintances brought a Bolognese prostitute called Faustina home to supper. She was a very beautiful woman, though she was about thirty years old ; and she had with her a little maid of thirteen or fourteen. Now as Faustina was my friend's property, I would not have had any dealings with her for all the gold in the world ; and although she said she was much in love with me, I never swerved from my loyalty to my friend. But after they were in bed, I ran off with the little maid, who was as fresh as fresh ; and it would have been a bad job for her if her mistress had known. So I spent a much pleasanter night than if I had had the mistress Faustina. Next day when dinner time came near, I was tired and hungry as after a walk of many miles. Then I was seized with a violent headache ; swellings rose in my left arm, and I discovered a carbuncle just by my left wrist-bone. Every one in the house was terrified ; my friend, the big cow, and the little calf all fled away, and I was left alone with my poor little shop-boy, who refused to leave me. I felt suffocated, and I looked on myself as a dead man. Just then the father of my apprentice passed by, who was Cardinal Jacobacci's household physician. The boy ran out to meet him, crying, "Come, father, and see Benvenuto, who is in bed, and not very well." Not thinking what my illness might be, he came in at once, felt my pulse, and then too clearly saw what he would fain have been blind to. Turning quickly on his son, he cried, "O you faithless boy,

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you have ruined me ! How can I ever again go into the Cardinal's presence ? " To which the boy replied, " My master, father, is worth more than all the cardinals in Rome." Then turning to me, the doctor said, " Now that I am here I will treat you. Only of one thing I warn you, that if you have been with a woman, there is no help for you." To this I answered, " I was with one last night." " With what sort of creature ? " asked the doctor, " and how long ? " " The whole night," I replied, " and with a very young girl." Then seeing he had spoken rashly, he made haste to add, " Since the sores are still fresh and not putrid, and since there has been no delay about the remedy, do not be over-anxious, for I certainly hope to cure you." When he had treated me and gone away, there came in one of my dearest friends, called Giovanni Rigogli, who grieved over my illness, and at my solitary condition. " Depend upon it, Benvenuto, my friend," he said, " I shall never leave you till I see you cured." Then I told him not to come near me, for I was doomed. Only I begged him to be good enough to take a quantity of crown pieces that were in a little box near my bed, and, as soon as God should have taken me from the world, to send them to my poor father. He was to write to him cheerfully how I, too, had succumbed to the common fate of that terrible season. But my dear friend swore he would not be parted from me for anything ; and whatever should come to pass, were it good or ill, he knew quite well what it behoved him to do for his friend. So we went on by the help of God ; and, thanks to the marvellous remedies which were applied, a great improvement set in, and I came happily out of that terrible illness. While still the wound was open, but stuffed with lint and bandaged, I used to ride about on a little wild horse I had. It had hair four fingers long, was just the size of a young bear—and,

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indeed, looked very much like one. On it I rode away to find the painter Rosso, who was living outside Rome, towards Civit  Vecchia, at a place called Cervetera, on the estate of the Count of Anguillara. I found my friend, who was delighted to see me. Whereupon I said to him, "I am come to do to you what you did to me many months ago." At that he burst out laughing, and embracing and kissing me, told me to be quiet for the Count's sake. Thus happily I stopped there about a month, eating and drinking of the best, and made much of by the Count. Every day I went off by myself to the sea-shore, and there dismounting, used to gather curious and beautiful pebbles, shell-fish, and shells. The last day I went there I was attacked by a number of masked men, who had disembarked from a Moorish galley. When they thought they had got me into a corner, whence it did not seem possible for me to escape from their hands, I sprang upon my pony, making up my mind that in the perilous pass I had come to, it was now a choice of being shot or drowned. But, as God willed, my little horse, which was the one I have spoken of above, took an extraordinary leap, and I made off, giving thanks to Heaven. I told the Count all about it, and he went armed in their pursuit ; but their galleys were already out at sea. Next day I went back to Rome in good health and spirits.

xxx. By this time the plague had almost passed away, and all who survived lived a merry life and made much of each other. From this there sprang up a society of painters, sculptors, and goldsmiths, the best in Rome ; and the founder of it was a sculptor, Michel Agnolo. This Michel Agnolo came from Siena. He was a very clever man, one who could bear comparison with any in his profession ; but above everything else the pleasantest and most affectionate fellow in the world. He was the eldest

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in years, but having regard to bodily strength, the youngest of us all. We used to meet at least twice every week without fail. I must not forget to say that to this company belonged Giulio Romano, the painter, and Gianfrancesco, both distinguished pupils of the great Raffaello of Urbino. When we had been meeting over and over again, our great master of the ceremonies suggested that the Sunday following we should all come to supper at his house, and that every one should be obliged to bring with him his "crow"—such was the name Michel Agnolo gave to these ladies. If any man failed to bring one, he should be fined a supper to the whole club. Whoever of us had no traffic with such women of the town, had to provide himself with one, at whatever expense and trouble, that he might not be shamed among all the great artists at the supper. Now I had thought I was very well provided for in a pretty girl called Pantasilea, who was very much in love with me ; but I was forced to concede her to one of my best friends called Bachiaccia, who had been, and still was, very amorous of her. This gave rise to a slight lover's quarrel, for when she saw that I gave her up to Bachiaccia without a word, she thought I held her of very little account. Out of this there grew a very big affair in the course of time, when she wished to revenge herself for the slight I had put upon her ; but that I shall recount in its own place. Now as the hour drew near when we were to present ourselves to the worthy assembly, each man with his "crow," I found myself with nobody. I thought it would be ridiculous to fail for so silly a reason, yet I could not make up my mind to take some foul drab under my wing into such a distinguished company. Then I bethought me of a pleasant jest which might add to our amusement. So having made up my mind on the point, I called a young lad of sixteen who lived near me, the son of a

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Spanish coppersmith. This youth was giving himself to Latin letters, and was very studious. His name was Diego. He was handsome, and had a marvellously beautiful complexion, while the moulding of his head was even more beautiful than that of an antique Antinous ; and many a time had I drawn him, and had got much reputation where I had used him as a model. The boy was acquainted with no one, so that he was not known. He dressed in a careless, slovenly fashion, the one thing he loved being his precious studies. Calling him into my house, I begged him to let me deck him out in the women's garments I had got ready. He made no objection, and put on the things at once. By dressing his hair in elegant fashion I much enhanced the beauty of his face, and I put rings in his ears. These rings were split ; and only clipped the ears, which had, nevertheless, the look of being pierced. After that I put round his neck a golden necklace, set with beautiful and rich jewels ; and I adorned his pretty hands with rings. Then I led him gently by the ear in front of my large mirror ; and when the boy saw himself, he called out lustily, "Gracious Heaven ! is this Diego ?" Whereupon I answered, "Yes, it is Diego of whom I have never yet asked a favour. Now all I ask of him is that he oblige me in an honest thing—to wit, that in these garments he come to supper with the distinguished company of artists of whom many a time I have spoken to him." The lad, who was modest, honest, and intelligent, lost his confidence of a moment ago, looked on the ground, and remained so some time without speaking a word. Then all at once he lifted his eyes, and said, "With Benvenuto I am ready to go. So now let us set off."

Wrapping up his head in a great kerchief, which in Rome they call a summer cloth, we came to the appointed place, where already everybody else was

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assembled ; and they all gave us greeting. When I took the kerchief from my pretty one's head, Michel Agnolo, who, as I said before, was the drollest and pleasantest man in the world, seized Giulio with one hand and Giovanfrancesco with the other—he was sitting between them—and with all his strength forced them to bow down ; while kneeling on the ground himself he begged for mercy, and called to all the company, saying, “Look, look, of such are the angels of Paradise—for though they are called angels, (*Angeli*), yet are there some in women's form (*Angiele*).” Then he cried aloud—

“Angel of goodness, angel fair,
Save and bless me ! Hear my prayer ! ”

At this my charming creature laughed, and with “her” right hand gave him a papal benediction, saying many pretty things besides. Then rising to his feet, Michel Agnolo said, “We kiss the Pope's feet, but we kiss the angels' cheeks” ; and when he suited the action to the word, the youth flushed, and so did his beauty grow the more.

When this had been gone through, the whole room was found to be full of sonnets, which we had all made and sent to Michel Agnolo. The youth began to read them aloud, and as he did so, his wonderful beauty grew beyond telling. Then followed a great deal of talk, which I will not set down here, for it is beside my purpose. Only one jest I must not omit, which was uttered by the great painter Giulio. Looking shrewdly round the room, but letting his eyes rest longer on the ladies than on us, he turned to Michel Agnolo and said, “Michel Agnolo, dear friend, your nickname of ‘crow’ is very suitable to-day, though, indeed, they seem even less lovely than crows by the side of one of the loveliest peacocks imaginable.”

The viands being prepared, and we about to sit

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down, Giulio begged us to let him appoint our places at table. This being granted, he took the ladies by the hand, and led each in turn to the inner side of the board, and placed my companion in the middle. Then he arranged all the men on the outside, with me in the centre ; for he said I deserved every honour. As a background to the ladies, there was a trellis covered with natural jasmine blossoms at their fairest, so becoming to them all, but especially to mine, that words must fail to tell it. And so we all gave ourselves up to the enjoyment of that rich supper, where every good thing was most abundantly provided. After we had supped, singers accompanied by instruments entertained us with wonderful music, and since they sang and played out of books, my lovely creature requested to sing a part too. Then when "she" performed her rôle almost better than the others, the astonishment was so great that Giulio and Michel Agnolo no longer spoke of her jestingly, as at first, but their words were grave, serious, and full of real admiration.

After the music, a certain Aurelio Ascolano, a marvellous improvisatore, began to speak the praises of the ladies in divine and beautiful fashion, yet while his rhythmic words flowed out, the two ladies who sat by my fair one, never stopped chattering. One of them told the story of her own misfortune ; and the other asked my charmer how it had happened with her, and who were her friends, and how long she had been at Rome, and much else of the kind. Of course, if I had nothing better to do than to describe all the amusing little incidents that occurred, I could tell of many which arose out of Pantasilea's infatuation for me. But such things being not in my plan, I pass them over briefly. Now the conversation of those horrid women began to annoy my "girl"—to whom, by the way, we had given the name of Pomona ; and Pomona, in her effort to

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escape from their foolish talk, turned now to one side and now to the other. Then the woman whom Giulio had brought asked her if she felt ill. She said yes, and that she believed she was a month or so gone with child, and that she was suffering great pain. The two who sat one on each side of her were at once full of compassion, and, putting their hands on her, found she was a boy. Quickly withdrawing their hands, they got up from the table, flinging words at her as might have befitted a handsome youth. Then cries broke out on all sides, and in the midst of the laughter and the astonishment, Michel Agnolo asked leave of all to impose on me a penance of his own fashioning. This granted, he hoisted me up, amid the loud cries of the guests, calling out, "Viva il signore ! Viva il signore !" And this, said he, was the penance I merited, for having played them so fine a trick. Thus ended that very merry supper and that pleasant day ; and we all went home.

xxxii. If I were to describe minutely the kind and the number of works which I made for all sorts of people, my story would be too long. All I need say is, that I strove with every effort and diligence to attain skill in all the various arts of which I have already spoken. At this time I was practising the whole of them side by side. I have not yet found an opportunity of telling of the most important things I was engaged on, but I shall wait for a more fitting place, which will soon come. Michel Agnolo, the Sienese sculptor, was now at work on the tomb of the dead Pope Adrian. The painter Giulio Romano left us for the service of the Marquis of Mantua. The other comrades were scattered, one here, one there, on business of their own ; so that the company of artists I have spoken of was almost entirely dispersed.

About this time there came into my hands some

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little Turkish daggers. Their handles as well as their blades were of steel ; and even the sheaths were of the same material. On them were chased, with iron gravers, groups of delightful foliage in the Turkish manner, and the spaces were filled in with gilt. I was seized with a great desire to prove myself in a kind of art so different from the others I had tried ; and finding that I succeeded admirably, I made several things of the kind. Mine were far finer and more lasting than the Turkish ones, for several reasons. In the first place, with my graver I cut much deeper and with a wider scoop than is ever seen in Turkish work. Then, again, the Turkish designs are only the leaves of the Egyptian bean, mingled with sun-flowers ; and though these have a certain grace of their own, one gets tired of them sooner than of our arabesques. Of course, in Italy we design foliage in many different fashions. The Lombards have a charming way of arranging ivy and bryony in their patterns with the loveliest turns and twists, which give delight to the eye. Then the Tuscans and the Romans make even a better choice, counterfeiting the leaves of the acanthus, called bear's foot, with its stems and flowers winding variously about ; and amongst the foliage may be fittingly set divers little figures of birds or animals, which display the designer's fancy. Some of their patterns they find in nature, among wild flowers—those called snap-dragons, for instance, and these are not the only ones which clever artists work in along with their other pretty fantasies. Such things are called by the ignorant "grotesques." They have got this name in modern times from having been found by antiquaries in certain underground caves in Rome, these caves having been in ancient times chambers, bath-houses, studies, halls, and such like. The antiquaries finding them in those cavernous places—for while the ground has

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been raised in the course of time, these chambers have remained below, and in Rome are called grottos—hence has sprung the term “grotesques.” But this is not their right name. The ancients delighted in drawing creatures, for the different parts of which they took hints from goats and cows and horses, and they called these curious mixtures by the name of monsters; so do our craftsmen compose from their medley of leaves another sort of monster. Therefore, monsters, not grotesques, is their real name. And when I designed foliage after this fashion, my work was much finer than the Turkish.

Now about this time I came across some vases, or little antique urns, filled with ashes. Among the ashes I found iron rings worked in gold by the ancients, in each of which was set a little shell. I inquired of scholars, who said these rings were worn by such as did greatly desire to remain with minds unmoved in the midst of any extraordinary occurrence, whether it brought them good or evil. At the request of some gentlemen, who were great friends of mine, I therefore set about making some of those little rings. But I made mine of fine tempered steel, and when they were delicately chased and inlaid with gold, they were very beautiful objects; and for making one of them I sometimes got more than forty crowns.

In those days little gold medals were much in fashion, and noblemen and men of rank had some emblem of their own devising engraved on these, and they wore them in their caps. I made a great many, and it was no easy task. Now Caradosso, the very clever artist of whom I have already spoken, did this kind of work; and as his designs contained more than one figure, he would not sell them for less than a hundred gold crowns a piece. So I was preferred to him by certain gentlemen, yet not so much on account of his high prices as because he was a slow

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worker. For these customers I made, amongst other things, a medal in competition with this great artist. There were four figures in it, over which I took a great deal of trouble. Now as it fell out, when these nobles and gentlemen put mine alongside that of the famous Caradosso, they declared it to be much better made and more beautiful, and said I might ask whatever I liked for my trouble—for as I had given them full satisfaction, they wished to do no less for me. Whereupon I said the best reward of my labours, and the one I most desired, was to have equalled the work of so accomplished a man, and that if their honours were of this opinion I held myself to be handsomely paid. And thus I took my leave. Without delay they sent after me so liberal a present that I was content ; and so strong a desire to do well grew within me that it was the starting-point of what will be heard of by and by.

xxxii. Now must I diverge a little from the story of my profession, having a mind to tell of certain unfortunate occurrences which have happened in my toilsome life. I have already spoken of that company of artists and of the amusing incidents brought about by my connection with the lady Pantasilea, who bore me that false and burdensome love. She was terribly angry with me for that jest of mine—I mean when Diego the Spaniard came to the supper-party I have spoken of—and she had sworn to have her revenge. Now, as I am going to relate, an opportunity for the same in due course arose, which put my life in the greatest danger. Here I must tell that a young man called Luigi Pulci came to Rome about this time. He was the son of the Pulci who was beheaded for incest with his daughter. Now this young man had a marvellous poetic talent, with a knowledge of good Latin letters, and he wrote well. In person he was extraordinarily handsome and graceful ; he had left the service of I do not know

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which bishop, and was stricken with the French evil. When he was a boy in Florence, it was the custom on summer nights to assemble in certain places out of doors ; and on such occasions he would sing with the best of the *improvisatori*. His voice was so beautiful that the divine Michel Agnolo Buonarroti, prince of sculptors and painters, would go and hear him with the greatest eagerness and pleasure whenever he knew where he could be found. And a certain man called Piloto, a very clever goldsmith, and myself used to go along with him. It was so I had got acquainted with Luigi Pulci. That had been years ago, and now in a wretched condition he came to Rome, found me out, and begged me to help him for the love of God. Moved by compassion, partly on account of his great talents, partly for love of my native place, and also because by nature I am tender-hearted, I took him into my house, and had him treated by a physician. As he was still young, he soon recovered. But while he was seeking his health he studied continually, and I helped him to procure as many books as I could. So Luigi, aware of the great benefits he was receiving from me, thanked me over and over again, by words and by tears, saying that if God ever put the chance in his way, he would recompense me for all I had done for him. I answered that I had done not what I should have wished, but what I could ; and that it was the duty of human creatures to help one another. Only, I reminded him that the kindness I had done to him he should return to whosoever might need his help as much as he had needed mine ; likewise, that he should treat me as a friend, for I was indeed his.

Very soon this young man began to haunt the Court of Rome, where he soon found a place for himself ; and ere long he entered into an arrangement with a bishop of eighty years of age, who was called Gurgensis. This bishop had a nephew called Messer

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Giovanni, a Venetian gentleman. Now Messer Giovanni seemed to be much enamoured of Luigi Pulci's talents, and these were a pretext for his making the young man as much at home in the household as he was himself. Luigi having spoken of me, and of his great obligations to me, Messer Giovanni wished to make my acquaintance. So one evening when I was giving a little supper to Pantasilea, just as we were going to sit down to table, Messer Giovanni came in along with Luigi Pulci, and after some formalities, stayed to eat with us. As soon as the brazen-faced whore set eyes on the fair youth, she had her designs on him. Seeing this, as soon as our pleasant supper was over, I called Luigi aside and told him that for the sake of the kindness he owned I had done him, he must never seek the company of that prostitute. His reply was, "Alas, my friend Benvenuto, do you take me then for a madman?" "Not for a madman, but for a young man," I answered; "and I swear to you by God that I have no thought of her at all, but I should be very sorry if through her you broke your neck." Whereupon he swore and called God to witness that if ever he spoke to her he might break his neck upon the spot. The poor young fellow must have sworn this oath to God with all his heart, for he did, indeed, break his neck, as shall soon be told. Messer Giovanni, it could be seen, loved him in an unnatural fashion. Every day we saw the youth with new suits of velvet and silk, and perceived he was all given up to evil ways and was neglecting his wonderful talents. He pretended not to see me, nor to know me; for I had reproached him with giving himself over as a prey to hideous vices, which would be the death of him one day, as I had said.

xxxiii. Now his friend Messer Giovanni bought a very fine black horse for him, for which he paid a hundred and fifty crowns. The horse was admirably

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trained, and Luigi went caracolling round on it, paying his attentions to the prostitute Pantasilea. I was aware of what was going on, but gave no heed, saying to myself that a man must do what he must ; and I bent all my mind to my studies. Now it happened that one Sunday evening we were invited to supper with Michel Agnolo, the Sienese sculptor ; and it was summer-time. To this supper came Bachiaccia, of whom I have already spoken, and he brought with him Pantasilea, his first love. At table she was seated between me and Bachiaccia. But just in the middle of supper she got up, saying she wished to retire, for she was in pain, but that she would soon return. In the meanwhile we went on pleasantly talking and supping, and she stopped away a long time. Now it happened that being on the alert, I felt sure I heard something like muffled laughter in the street. I had the knife in my hand which I had been using at table. The window was so near that by stretching a little I could see Luigi Pulci outside with Pantasilea, and I heard Luigi saying, "Oh, if that devil of a Benvenuto could only see, it would be the worse for us !" And she answered, "No fear. Listen to the noise they are making. They are thinking of anything rather than us." At this point I—who knew perfectly who they were—threw myself down from the window, and seized Luigi by the cloak. With the knife in my hand I had certainly slain him, had he not spurred the white horse he was riding and left his cloak in my hands, to escape with his life. Pantasilea ran for refuge to a neighbouring church. The rest, who had been sitting at table, now sprang up, and all came down to me, begging me not to disturb myself or them for so worthless a trollop. To which I answered that for her I cared not a rap, but it was that rascally youth, who flaunted his contempt for me, I was bent on punishing. So I

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refused to yield to the persuasions of those artist friends of mine, and with my sword in my hand I went away by myself towards Prati, for the house where we had been supping was near to the Castello gate, which led there. As I was making my way along slowly in this direction the sun went down ere long, and as I re-entered Rome it was already night and murky, but the gates were not yet locked.

About two hours after sundown I came on the house of Pantasilea, intending, if so be that Luigi Pulci was there, to make myself very unpleasant to them both. But when my eyes and ears gave evidence there was nobody in the house save a little slut of a servant-maid called Canida, I went off to stow away my cloak and the scabbard of my sword. Then I returned to the house, which was on the Tiber, behind the Banchi. Opposite the house was the garden of an inn-keeper called Romolo. The garden was shut in by a thick thorn hedge, in which I stood in hiding, waiting till the lady should come home with Luigi. When I had been there some time I was joined by my friend Bachiacca, who had perhaps guessed I might be found there, or, it may be, had been directed thither. Whispering to me "Gossip!"—for so we called each other in jest—"I entreat you for the love of God"—and he was almost weeping as he spoke—"I beseech you, dear gossip, do no hurt to that poor little thing, for she is not a whit to blame." To which I replied, "If you do not get out of this at once when I tell you, I'll hit you on the head with my sword!" My poor gossip got such a turn that he was taken ill and was forced to go and relieve himself. It was a starry night and of wonderful radiance. Suddenly I heard the hoofs of many horses, and from this side and that they came up. It was Luigi and Pantasilea, accompanied by a certain Messer Benvegnato from Perugia, Chamberlain of Pope Clement. In their train came

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four doughty Perugian captains with other gallant young soldiers. In all there were more than a dozen men-at-arms. When I perceived this, and bethought myself I did not know how to escape, I made up my mind to stick in the hedge. But the sharp thorns hurt me, and, goaded like a bull, I determined to jump out and make off, when at that very moment Luigi, who had his arm round Pantasilea's neck, said, "Once more I must kiss you just to spite that traitor Benvenuto." Then, pricked by the thorns and stung by the young man's words, I sprang out, raised my sword, and shouted, "You be all dead men!" My sword fell heavy on Luigi's shoulder, but his satyr-like friends had lined his doublet with coats of mail and such-like things. Yet I had struck fiercely, and the sword, swerving, came down on Pantasilea's nose and mouth. Both Luigi and she fell to the ground, and Bachiaccia, still unbraced, screamed and ran away. Hotly I turned to the others with my sword, and the gallant men, hearing a great commotion in the inn, thought an army of a hundred strong was coming up. They had bravely put their hands to their swords, but a couple of horses, which had got frightened, threw them into disorder. Two of the best riders were thrown, and the rest took to flight. When I saw things were turning out well for me, with hasty step, but with honour, I withdrew from the field, not wishing to tempt fortune more than was necessary. In this extraordinary confusion some of the soldiers and captains were wounded with their own swords, and Messer Benvegnato, the Pope's Chamberlain, was bruised and trampled by his mule. One of his servants, too, who had drawn his sword, fell at the same time as his master, and wounded him sorely in the hand. In his pain Benvegnato swore worse than the rest, crying out in his Perugian accent, "By God, I'll see that Benvegnato gives Benvenuto a

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lesson ! ” And he ordered one of his captains—perhaps a braver fellow than the others, but a youth, and so with less sense—to go in search of me. This young fellow came to seek me out in the place to which I had retired, namely, the house of a great Neapolitan noble, who, knowing something of my attainments in my profession and the soldier-like disposition of my mind and body—which was the thing he felt most interest in—had taken a great fancy to me. Now, seeing my good reception and feeling myself quite at home, I gave such an answer to the captain that I think he much repented having come to brave me. After some days, the wounds of Luigi and his prostitute and the rest being nearly healed, this great Neapolitan gentleman was approached by Messer Benvegnato—whose anger had all passed away—that he might induce me to make peace with young Luigi and the brave soldiers, who had no ill-will against me, and, indeed, wished to make my acquaintance. Accordingly my host promised them all that he would bring me to whatever meeting-place they wished, and that he would willingly use his influence with me to make up the quarrel. But he insisted that there should be no throwing about of words on either side, for it would be too undignified. It was enough merely to go through the forms of drinking together and embracing ; and he would be the spokesman, and would do all he could to serve them. And so it fell out. One Thursday evening this gentleman took me to the house of Messer Benvegnato, where were gathered all the soldiers who had been routed in the scuffle. They were sitting at table. My friend had in his train more than thirty gallant men, all well armed, which Benvegnato did not expect. When we entered the hall, my host first, and I after him, he said, “God save you, gentlemen ! Benvenuto, who is to me as my own brother, is come with me here

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to do right willingly whatever you propose." Messer Benvegnato, at the sight of so many persons filing into the hall, replied, "We seek peace and nothing else." He promised, therefore, that I should have no annoyance from the governor of Rome and his minions. Then we made peace, and afterwards I went back to my shop, where I never could be for an hour without that Neapolitan coming to see me or sending for me.

In the meanwhile Luigi Pulci had recovered, and every day he was to be seen riding about on his well-trained black horse. One day, though it was raining, he was showing off his horsemanship just near Pantasilea's gate, when he slipped and fell, with the animal on the top of him, and fractured his right thigh. He died a few days after in Pantasilea's house; and in this way was fulfilled the vow he had sworn so earnestly to God. Thus it is seen that God keeps count of the good and the bad, and to each man gives his deserts.

xxxiv. At this moment the whole world was in arms. Pope Clement had sent to Giovanni de' Medici to ask for troops. But when they came to Rome, they were so unruly that it was not safe to be in public shops. This was the reason why I retired to a pretty little house behind the Banks, where I worked for all the friends I had made. My works, however, about this time were not of great importance, so I do not mean to speak of them. Just then I took great delight in music and similar pastimes.

Pope Clement, by the advice of Messer Jacopo Salviati, disbanded the five companies sent him by my lord Giovanni, who had died in Lombardy. Therefore, Bourbon, knowing that Rome was unprotected, forced on his army with all speed to our gates. Then all Rome rushed to arms. Now I was a great friend of Alessandro, son of Piero del

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Bene. Indeed, when the Colonna had attacked Rome, he had asked me to guard his house. So now, on this more important occasion, he begged me to enlist fifty men as a guard for his palace, and I was to be at the head of them, as in the Colonna affair. So I collected fifty right gallant young fellows, and we took possession of his house, and were well paid and well entertained. When Bourbon's army appeared before the walls of Rome, Alessandro del Bene wished to go and see them, and begged me to accompany him. So with one of the best of my men we set out ; and on the way a young man called Cecchino della Casa joined us. When we reached the walls near the Campo Santo, we caught sight of that wonderful army, now doing its very utmost to force an entrance. Just where we were posted on the walls many young fellows were lying dead, killed by the enemy's fire. The fight was at its hottest here, and the smoke as thick as you can imagine. Turning to Alessandro, I said, "Let us get home as quick as we can, for here it is hopeless. Look ! they come up, and our men flee." Then Alessandro, desperately frightened, replied, "Would to God we had never come !" And with that he turned in the maddest terror to escape. But I checked him, saying, "Since you have brought me here, I must play the man ;" and aiming my arquebus where I saw the enemy was thickest, I fired at one I saw raised above the others. The cloud prevented me seeing whether he was on horseback or on foot. Turning hastily to Alessandro and Cecchino, I ordered them to discharge their guns, and showed them how to escape a return shot from the enemy outside. When we had each fired twice, I crept stealthily up to the wall, and saw an extraordinary tumult among the enemy, for one of our shots had knocked down Bourbon. And, so far as I could hear afterwards, he it was whom I had seen raised above the others.

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Leaving this place, we went through the Campo Santo, and entered by St. Peter's. Then we came out just at the Church of Sant' Agnolo, and reached the great gate of the castle with much difficulty ; for Rienzo da Celi and Orazio Baglioni were attacking and slaughtering all those who had left their places on the walls. Reaching this gate, we found some of the enemy had entered Rome, and they were at our heels. As the castellan wished to let the portcullis fall, he had to clear the way somewhat, and so we four got inside. No sooner had I entered than the captain, Pallone de' Medici, took possession of me as a member of the castle household, and thus forced me to leave Alessandro, which I did much against my will. While I was going up to the donjon, Pope Clement had entered by the corridors. He had been unwilling to leave the palace of St. Peter before this, never imagining that the enemy would make their way into the city. Now, having got inside in the way I have described, I took up my post near some big guns, which were under the charge of a bombardier called Giuliano the Florentine. This Giuliano, hanging over the battlements of the castle, saw his poor house being sacked and his wife and children outraged ; so, lest he should massacre his own kith and kin, he did not dare discharge his guns, but threw his fuse upon the ground, and wailed aloud, and tore his face. And other bombardiers were doing the same. Therefore I seized one of the fuses, and, with the help of some who were calmer in their minds, pointed some swivels and falconets where I saw a chance, slaughtering therewith a great many of the enemy. But for this, those that came into Rome that morning, marching straight to the castle, might have made an easy entry, for the artillery were doing nothing to stop them. I kept up the fire, for which several cardinals and noblemen blessed me, giving me the greatest encouragement. Of course, in my

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impetuous mood I was trying to do the impossible ; enough that it was through me the castle was saved that morning, and that the other bombardiers came back to their duty. So I toiled on through all that day. When evening had come, while the army was entering Rome by the Trastevere, Pope Clement appointed a great Roman nobleman, Messer Antonio Santa Croce by name, head of all the gunners. This great lord came up to me at once, made much of me, and stationed me with five splendid pieces of artillery in the most exposed part of the castle, which is called the Angel. This place goes all round the keep, and looks over both Prati and Rome. Then he gave me a company of men to help me in the management of the guns, handed me an instalment of my pay, consigned me bread and a little wine, and entreated me to go on as I had begun. There have been times when I have been more inclined to the profession of arms than to the one of my choice, and with such goodwill did I give myself to it now, that I did better in it than in my own art. When night came on and the enemy were in Rome, we who were in the castle—but especially myself, who have always delighted in new experiences—stayed looking on at the extraordinary scene and the conflagration, which only those who were with us could have any clear idea of. Yet I will not set myself to describe the event, but will go on with the tale of my own life which I have begun, and of such things as appertain to it.

xxxv. Continuing, as I did, my artillery practice for the whole month when we were besieged in the castle, I had a great many wonderful adventures the while, all worthy of being recounted. But as I do not wish to be too lengthy, nor to diverge over much from the tale of my profession, I shall leave the greater part of them untold, only mentioning those I am forced to, which will be few in number, but the

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most remarkable. And here is the first. Messer Santa Croce ordered me down from the Angel that I might fire on certain houses near the castle, where some of our enemies had been seen to enter. While I was firing, one of their cannons marked me ; but as it struck a corner of a battlement and took away some of the stone, it did not do me much harm. The mass of stone, however, struck me in the chest, and, all breathless, I lay prone on the ground as one dead. Yet I could hear all that the bystanders were saying. Among them was Messer Antonio Santa Croce lamenting loud, "Alas ! for we have lost our best helper." Hearing the noise, a certain companion of mine ran up. He was Gianfrancesco the fifer, but he had greater talents for medicine than for music. Bursting into tears at the sight of me, he ran for a flask of excellent Greek wine. Then he made a tile red-hot, sprinkled on it a good handful of wormwood, and then poured the Greek wine over it. When the wormwood was well soaked, he put it at once on my chest, where the mark of the blow was plainly to be seen. And such was the virtue of the thing that my wandering senses came back to me at once. But when I would fain have spoken I could not, for some foolish soldiers had filled my mouth with earth. To give me the sacrament had been their thought, but it was like excommunication ; and I could scarce regain my senses, for the earth was more harmful than the blow I had received. But that danger passed. I turned once again to the fury of the guns, keeping up the firing with the force and energy of my whole being.

Now Pope Clement had sent for help to the Duke of Urbino, who was with the Venetian army. By his ambassador he sent a message to his Excellency, to wit, that while the castle of an evening showed three fires upon its topmost point, and fired thrice a triple discharge from its guns, it should be for a sign

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it had not surrendered. It was I who had charge of lighting the beacons and firing the guns, and by day I directed our fire wherever it could do mischief. So for these reasons the Pope's opinion of me grew still higher, for he saw I performed my business with all the foresight it demanded. The Duke never came to our help. But I'm not here to explain that, and I'll say no more.

xxxvi. While I was up here at my devilish business, several of the cardinals who were in the castle, came to see me, in especial the Cardinal Ravenna and the Cardinal de' Gaddi. Many a time I told them not to expose themselves, for those red caps of theirs were marks for the enemy. Indeed, from neighbouring palaces, such as the Torre de' Bini, both they and I ran the greatest danger ; so that at last I had them locked up, and gained only their ill-will thereby. Then, too, I often had visits from Orazio Baglioni, who was very friendly with me. One day when we were talking together he noticed something going on in a certain tavern outside the Porta di Castello, at a place called Baccanello. This tavern had for its sign a sun painted red, which hung between two windows. The windows were shut, but Signor Orazio guessed that between them, on the inner side of the wall, some soldiers were sitting drinking. So he said to me, "If you could hit the wall, a cubit's length from that sun, with your smaller cannon I think you would do a good stroke of business. For from the noise I hear I judge them to be men of great importance." To which I answered that I could easily hit the sun through its centre, but a barrel of stones was standing near the mouth of the gun, and it might be knocked down by the firing and the shock. But he replied, "Don't waste time, Benvenuto, for, in the first place, it is not possible that, being where it is, the blast from the gun should knock it down ; and, secondly, even if the Pope were down there,

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there would be less harm done than you think. So, fire away!" Then without another thought I hit the middle of the sun, just as I had said I should do. But, as I had foreseen, the barrel toppled, fell exactly between Cardinal Farnese and Messer Jacopo Salviati, and would to a certainty have flattened them both, had not the Cardinal at that moment been railing at Messer Jacopo for causing the sack of Rome, and so, stepping aside to call each other names, they escaped being crushed by my barrel. Hearing the loud noise which this made in the court below, good Signor Orazio hastened down; and I, stretching over at the point where the barrel had fallen, heard some people say they would like to make an end of that bombardier. Whereupon I placed two falconets in front of the staircase, and resolved to fire on the first man who should come up. Now certain servants of Cardinal Farnese must have been sent to do me a mischief. So I faced the staircase with the lighted fuse in my hand, and cried to some of those on the stairs whose faces I knew, "Oh, you idle beggars, if you don't get out of this, if but one of you dare come up these steps, I have two falconets ready to blow you to atoms! So go and tell the Cardinal and his friends that I only did my superior's bidding; and what was done, and what is being done, is in defence of their priests, and not to do harm to them." Off they went, and then came Signor Orazio Baglioni running. Him, too, I ordered to stand back, else I'd be the death of him, I said; for I knew very well who he was. He hesitated a bit, and I could see he feared me somewhat, and then rejoined, "Benvenuto, I am your friend." To which I responded, "Come up, my lord, if so be you come alone." Now this signor, who was a very haughty man, stopped short for a moment, and then burst out angrily, "I've a good mind not to come a step farther, and to do just the contrary of what I had intended for you." To

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this I answered, that just as I had been stationed there for the defence of others, I should be quite as well able to take care of myself. Then he said that he was coming up alone. When he had mounted I saw his look had changed to me more than there seemed cause for. So I put my hand on my sword and stood there grimly facing him, whereupon he began to laugh ; the pallor of rage passed away, and he said to me pleasantly, " Benvenuto, my friend, I could not love you better than I do, and when God pleases I will prove it to you. Would to God you had killed those two rascals ! One of them is at the bottom of the mischief, as we know, and the other may yet be the cause of worse." Then he told me that, if I were asked, I must not tell he was with me when I fired the gun. And as for the rest, I was to have no fear. The confusion was tremendous, and we did not hear the end of it for a long time. But I will not discourse longer on the matter ; enough that I had very nearly revenged my father on Messer Jacopo Salviati, who, as he used to lament, had done him a thousand wrongs. At any rate, though unintentionally, I had given him a great scare. Of Farnese I will say no more at present. But it shall be told in its own place how much better it would have been for me had I killed him.

xxxvii. Thus I went on looking after my guns, every day being marked by some notable feats of mine, so that I acquired boundless credit and favour in the eyes of the Pope. Never a day passed but I killed some of the besiegers. Once when the Pope was walking round the keep, he saw a Spanish colonel in the Prati, whom by certain signs he recognised ; for the man had once been in his service. While he watched he talked about him. I, who was alone in the Angel, and knew nothing of what was going on, nevertheless saw a man occupied about

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the trenches. He had a little javelin in his hand, and his dress was all of rose colour. Bethinking myself what I could do against him, I took one of the gerfalcons which I had there, a piece bigger and longer than a sacro, and very like a small culverin. First I emptied it, and then loaded it with a good quantity of fine powder mixed with coarse. Then I aimed well at the red man, raising the muzzle tremendously, for he was far away, and guns of this sort cannot be expected to carry with precision at that range. When I fired, I aimed exactly at the red man's middle. He had slung his sword in front in arrogant Spanish fashion, and my ball hitting his blade, the man fell cut in two. The Pope, who was looking for nothing of the kind, was greatly pleased and astonished, for it seemed impossible to him a gun should have so long a range ; nor could he understand how the man should have been cut in half. Sending for me, he asked me to explain. So I told him what ingenuity I had used ; but as for cutting the man in two, it was a thing neither of us could get at the bottom of. Then, kneeling down, I begged him to remove from me the curse of this homicide and of others I had committed in that castle in the service of the Church. Whereupon the Pope, raising his hands, made the sign of the cross broadly over my face, gave me his blessing and his pardon for all the homicides I had committed, or ever should commit, in the service of the Church Apostolic. So I left him, and once on the tower again I went on firing without stop, and hardly ever was shot of mine in vain. My drawing, my fine studies, and my skill in music were all drowned in the roar of those guns ; and were I to tell minutely all the fine things which I did in that infernally cruel business, I should strike the world with wonder. But not to be too lengthy, I shall pass them all over, save just a few of the most notable which I am forced

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to tell. So here. I kept thinking day and night how best I could do my part in the defence of the Church. Now I knew that when the enemy changed guard, they passed through the big gate of Santo Spirito, which was within a moderate range. So I began to fire in that direction. But as I had to fire obliquely, I did not do all the mischief I should have liked, though every day my slaughter was considerable. Then the enemy, seeing their passage hindered, one night piled up more than thirty barrels on the crest of a roof, thus blocking up my view. Considering the matter rather more carefully than I had done before, I turned all my five pieces of artillery right on the barrels, and waited till two hours before sunset, when the guard would be changed. Now, thinking themselves secure, they came along more slowly and in denser mass than had been their wont ; so, when I fired, I not only knocked down the barrels in my way, but killed more than thirty men in that one blast. This I repeated twice again, and threw the soldiers into great disorder ; and the incident, joined to the fact that they had stuffed themselves with loot from the great sack, and were longing to enjoy the fruits of their labours, was the cause of their threatening to revolt and to desert. They were restrained, however, by their valorous captain, Gian di Urbino. To their great inconvenience, they were forced henceforth to take another passage when changing guard, a roundabout way of three miles, instead of only half a mile as before. This business being successfully carried through, all the gentlemen in the castle showered favours on me. Inasmuch as it had important consequences, I have wished to relate this event and have done with it ; for such things do not belong to the tale of my own art, which is the reason of my writing. If I cared to adorn my story with such things, too much would remain to tell. There is, however, just

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one more adventure I must relate, and this seems the place to do so.

xxxviii. I am now making a great leap forward when I tell how Pope Clement, desiring to save the tiaras and all the mass of jewels belonging to the Apostolic Camera, ordered me to come before him. Then he shut himself up in a room with only Cavalierino and me. This Cavalierino had been a stableman in the service of Filippo Strozzi, and was a Frenchman of the lowest birth. But being an excellent servant, Pope Clement had showered riches on him, and trusted him as he trusted himself. Now when the Pope, Cavalierino, and I were shut up in this room, the tiaras and all the jewels of the Apostolic Camera were placed before me, and his Holiness ordered me to take them out of their gold settings. This I did, and then I rolled each up in a little bit of paper, and we sewed them into the linings of the clothes which the Pope and Cavalierino wore. Then they handed all the gold over to me, telling me to melt it as secretly as I could. So I went up to the Angel, where my own room was, which I could lock, and where I might be free from disturbance. There I made myself a little furnace of brick, and put into the bottom of it a fair-sized ash-pot shaped like a plate. Then I threw the gold on the top of the coals, and little by little it melted and fell down into the pot. Yet all the while this furnace was working, I was watching for chances of doing hurt to our enemies; and as they were about a stone's-throw from us in the trenches below, I fired some rubbish at them from the piles of old ammunition belonging to the castle. Taking a swivel and a falconet, both rather damaged at the muzzle, I loaded them with this useless stuff, and when I fired, it went down with headlong fury, and did much unlooked-for damage in the trenches. So I kept on merrily at this work while I was melting the gold. Then a little before

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vespers I saw some one coming along the edge of the trench riding on a mule. The mule was going very quickly, and the rider was speaking to those in the trenches. Before he came opposite me I had been prudent enough to get ready my guns, and thus I fired just at the right moment. One stone hit him in the face. The rest struck the mule, which fell dead. Then arose a great tumult in the trench, and I fired my other piece, and dealt destruction. It was the Prince of Orange I had wounded, and now he was borne through the trenches to a tavern in the neighbourhood ; and thither ran in great haste all the great men in the army. Pope Clement, hearing what I had done, sent for me at once. He asked me how it happened, and I told him all. Moreover, I said the fallen man must be a person of the utmost importance, since, so far as could be seen, all the chiefs of the army had run at once to the tavern where they had carried him. Then the Pope, who was a quick-brained man, sent for Messer Antonio Santa Croce, the head of the gunners, as I have said, and bade him order all his bombardiers to direct their guns, which were very numerous, on that house, the firing of an arquebuse to be the signal. Thus the chiefs being slaughtered, he hoped the army, already demoralised, would all fall to pieces. Perhaps, he said, God had heard the prayers they had sent up continually, and in this way was going to free them from these impious rascals. So we got our guns ready, in obedience to the command of Santa Croce, and were waiting for the signal, when Cardinal Orsino heard of the thing, and began to revile the Pope. On no account should such a thing be done, said he ; for they were on the point of concluding peace ; and if the chiefs were slain, the army, left to itself, would take the castle, and utter ruin would be the result. So they refused to allow the order to be carried out. The poor Pope, in despair, seeing him-

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self fatally menaced from within and without, said he would leave the plans to them. Thus the order to us was countermanded ; but I, who could not hold myself in, when I realised they were coming to prevent us firing, discharged one of my small cannons, and the ball struck a pillar in the courtyard of the house where I had seen so many people gathered. This shot dealt such destruction to the enemy, that they were almost for abandoning the house. Cardinal Orsino would have had me hanged or shot without mercy ; but the Pope hotly defended me. As for the angry words that passed on the occasion, though I know what they were, I have no intention of telling them. For the writing of history is not my business. I shall only attend to my own affairs.

xxxix. As soon as I had melted the gold, I took it to the Pope, who thanked me much for what I had done, and ordered Cavalierino to pay me twenty-five crowns, excusing himself that he had no more to give me. A few days after peace was made. I set off with Signor Orazio Baglioni and a company of three hundred men towards Perugia ; and there Orazio would have consigned to me the company ; but I did not wish for it then, and told him I was going to see my father first, and redeem the ban which was on me still in Florence. Then he told me he was made Captain of the Florentines ; and here, too, was Ser Pier Maria di Lotto, the Florentine envoy, to whom Orazio heartily recommended me as his man.

And so I came to Florence with several other companions. There the plague was raging furiously. On my arrival I found my dear father, who had been thinking I had died in the sack, or that I should return to him naked and despoiled. But it was just the contrary, as he discovered. Here I was, alive, with my pockets full of money, with a servant and a good mount. So great was the joy with which I

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saw my father that, when he embraced and kissed me, I certainly thought I should have died on the spot. I told him the whole infernal history of the sack, and filled his hands with crowns, which I had gained in my military service, and we embraced each other over and over again. Then off he went to the Eight to redeem the ban on me. Now, as chance would have it, there still belonged to the Council one of those who had passed the sentence on me, indeed, the very man who had harshly told my father that he would send me into the country with the lances. So now my father had his revenge in some significant words, which were backed by his knowledge of the favour shown me by Orazio Baglioni.

Things were at this point when I told my father how Signor Orazio had made me captain ; and that I must be thinking of gathering my company. At these words the poor old man was terribly disturbed ; and he begged me, for the love of God, to undertake no such enterprise, though he was certain I was fit for it, and even for a greater. Then he added that his other son, my brother, was a mighty man of war, and my duty was to give myself up to that wonderful art at which, for so many years, I had laboured so earnestly. Though I promised to obey him, he was too shrewd not to know that if Signor Orazio came, I could not but continue my military career. I had given my promise, and there were other reasons as well. So, bethinking himself of the best means of getting me out of Florence, he said to me, "Oh, my dear son, here the plague is terrible ; and I am always imagining you coming home with it on you. Now, I remember when I was a young man, that I went away to Mantua, where I was made much of, and there I stayed several years. Therefore, I beg, nay, I command you, by your love for me, to leave this and go thither—and let it be rather to-day than to-morrow."

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xl. Now, it has always been my delight to see the world ; and as I had never been at Mantua, I went off willingly. The greater part of the money I had brought home I left with my dear father, promising to help him always wherever I should be. I left my elder sister to take care of the poor old man. She was called Cosa, and as she had never wished to marry, she had been received as a nun in Santa Orsola ; but she had not yet gone to live there, that she might take care of our old father, and be a guide to our younger sister, who had married a sculptor called Bartolommeo. So, with my father's blessing, I departed, and rode off on my good horse to Mantua.

I should have too many things to tell, were I to write down all the details of that little journey. The world lying under a cloud of pestilence and war, it was with the utmost difficulty I reached my destination. But once there, I immediately began to seek for work ; and got employment from a certain Maestro Niccolò of Milan, who was goldsmith to the Duke of Mantua. About two days after I was in full work, I went to pay a visit to Messer Giulio Romano, the distinguished painter, and my great friend. He received me with the utmost affection ; but he took it ill of me that I had not got down at his house. He was living like a great lord, and was engaged on work for the Duke outside the gate of Mantua, at a place called the Palazzo del Tè—a marvellous undertaking, on a great scale, as may probably be seen to this day. With all haste, Messer Giulio spoke of me to the Duke in the highest terms ; and I was commissioned to model a reliquary for the Blood of Christ, which the Mantuans possess, brought thither, they say, by Longinus. Then, turning to Messer Giulio, he told him to make me a design for the reliquary. Whereupon Messer Giulio answered, "My lord, Benvenuto is a man who has

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no need of the designs of others, and with this your Excellency will heartily agree when you see his model."

Taking the work in hand, I designed the reliquary so that the ampolla should fit well into it. Then I made a little model in wax of the lid—a Christ sitting with His left hand raised and supporting His great Cross, on which He leaned, while with His right He seemed to be opening the wound in His side. When the model was finished, the Duke was so pleased that he heaped favours on me, and gave me to understand he would keep me on in his service on such terms as would be profitable to me. Meanwhile I had paid my respects to the Cardinal his brother, who begged the Duke to be good enough to let me make the Pontifical seal of his most excellent reverence. This work I began, but while I was about it I took ill of the quartan fever; and whenever the fit was on me I lost my senses and cursed Mantua and its lord and whoever stayed there of his own accord. These words were reported to my patron by his Milanese goldsmith, who saw quite well that the Duke was going to give me employment. When my lord heard those sick words of mine he flew into a rage; and I was out of temper with Mantua, and so one of us was just as angry as the other. I finished the seal, which, together with some other little things for the Duke, ordered in the name of the Cardinal, was four months' work. I was well paid for it by the latter, who begged me to return to Rome, that wonderful city where we had become acquainted with each other.

Setting off, therefore, with a good supply of Mantuan crowns, I came to Governolo, the place where the most valiant Signor Giovanni had been slain. Here I had another little bout of fever, which did not, however, hinder my journey, for I quickly threw it off and had no more of it. When I got to

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Florence I thought to find my dear father. But when I knocked at the door there appeared at the window an old angry hunch-backed woman, who drove me off with insults, telling me my face would be the death of her. Addressing the hunchback, I said, "Tell me, you cross, misshapen hag, is there no better-looking face in the house than yours?" "No," she answered. "The Devil take you!" And I shouted back, "May two hours see the end of it then!" Hearing this altercation, a neighbour woman came out and told me that my father and the whole household had died of the plague. As I had been thinking this might be the case, my grief was the less. Then she added that only my younger sister Liperata had survived, and that she had been taken in by a pious woman called Monna Andrea de' Bellacci.

Then I left to go to the inn, but on the way there I met a dear friend of mine, Giovanni Rigogli, and got down at his house. Afterwards we went off to the piazza, where I heard that my brother was alive. Off I set to seek him at the house of a friend of his called Bertino Aldobrandi. There I found him, and our greetings and caresses were endless; and reason was there for some extravagance of joy, seeing he had heard news of my death and I of his. Then, breaking out into a long fit of laughter, he took me by the hand, saying, "Come, brother, I shall take you to a place you never would think of. For I must tell you I have given our sister Liperata again in marriage, and for a certainty she thinks you dead." On our way to her home we entertained each other with all the great things that had happened to us. When we arrived at her house, she was so overpowered by the unlooked-for event that she fell into my arms as if dead; and if my brother had not been there, her excitement and her dumbness must have made her husband think I was some one other than her brother,

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as at first he was inclined to. But Cecchino told him all, and helped to revive her from her swoon. Then with some tears for the father, sister, husband, and little son she had lost, she began to prepare supper ; and for the rest of that festive evening nothing more was said of the dead—we spoke of weddings rather. And thus merrily and most pleasantly our supper went by.

xli. Moved by the prayers of my brother and sister, I stopped on in Florence, though my own desire would have led me back to Rome. And, besides, that dear friend of mine, Piero di Giovanni Landi, of whose help to me in my troubles I have already spoken, also advised me to remain where I was for some time. Just then the Medici were exiled from Florence—that is, Signor Ippolito, who was afterwards Cardinal, and Signor Alessandro, afterwards Duke. So Piero said I should stay for a little time to see what was going to happen. I began, therefore, to work in the Mercato Nuovo, where I did a large business in setting jewels, and made a good living.

About this time there came to Florence a Sienese called Girolamo Marretti, who had lived a long time in Turkey, and was a very intelligent man. One day he came to my shop and commissioned me to make a gold medal for wearing in a hat, the design to be a Hercules wrenching the lion's mouth open. So I set about the thing, and while I was working at it Michel Agnolo Buonarroti came several times to see it. Now I had taken a great deal of pains with it, and the attitude of the figure was so fine, and the spirit of the animal so admirably expressed, that it had nothing in common with the work of such artists as had designed the same kind of thing before. Then, also, my method of working was entirely new to the divine Michel Agnolo. And so he praised my work ; and this was such an incitement

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to me to do well as I cannot describe. But I had nothing else in hand save jewel-setting ; and though my best earnings came from this, yet I was not contented, for I wished to do something higher than merely setting stones. Now I fell in with a certain young man of lofty spirit called Federigo Ginori. He had lived many years in Naples, where his handsome figure and his fine presence gained him such fame that he had been the lover of a princess. Well, this man, wishing to have a medal made—Atlas with the world on his shoulders to be the subject—he asked the great Michel Agnolo to make a sketch of a design. He answered Federigo thus : “ Go and seek out a young goldsmith called Benvenuto. He will serve you very well ; and you may be sure he will have no need of a design from me. But that you may not think I seek to shirk such a trifle, I’ll make a sketch with pleasure. Meanwhile speak to Benvenuto, and let him make a little model as well. Then the better design of the two can be carried out.” So Federigo Ginori came to see me, and said what he wanted, adding how much the wonderful Michel Agnolo had praised me, and how he had advised my making a little model in wax, while he—the marvellous man—had promised to make a drawing. Such encouragement was contained in the words of the great genius that I set to the work at once with the utmost energy. When he had finished it, a certain painter, a great friend of Michel Agnolo, called Giuliano Bugiardini, brought me the sketch of the Atlas. At the same time I showed Giuliano my little wax model, which was quite different from Michel Agnolo’s design. And so Federigo, and Bugiardini as well, said I should carry out the thing according to my model. I began it, therefore ; and when the most excellent Michel Agnolo saw it, he praised it more than I can tell. It was, as I have said, a figure engraved on a thin plate of gold ; the

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heaven on its back was a crystal ball, upon which was cut the zodiac on a field of lapis-lazuli. The whole thing was indescribably beautiful. Under it ran the motto, *Summa tulisse juvat*. Federigo being satisfied, paid me most liberally. Now about that time Aluigi Alamanni was in Florence. He was a great friend of Federigo Ginori, who often brought him to my shop ; and by his recommendation we became close friends.

xlii. Pope Clement had now declared war on the city of Florence, which made preparations for its defence. In every quarter the militia was organised, and I was under orders to serve too. For this I made sumptuous preparations. I was intimate with the best nobility of Florence, who showed a right good will in undertaking the defence of the city ; and in every quarter of the town were delivered the speeches usual at such times. The young men met together more than was their wont, and nothing else was ever talked about. One day, towards noon, a number of persons were gathered in my shop,—men full grown and youths, the chief in the city—when a letter from Rome was brought to me. It came from a man called Maestro Jacopino della Barca. His real name was Jacopo dello Sciorina, but in Rome he was known as della Barca, because he owned a ferry-boat which crossed the Tiber between Ponte Sisto and Ponte Santo Agnolo. This Maestro Jacopo was a person of great talent, and of amusing and delightful conversation. Once he had been a designer for the Florence cloth-weavers. He was on very friendly terms with Pope Clement, who took great pleasure in his talk. So one day when they were speaking together, the question arose of the sack, and the part which the Castle played in the defence of the city. Then the Pope, recalling me, paid me all the compliments you can think of ; and added that if he only knew where I was, he would very much like to have

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me back again. Maestro Jacopo told him I was in Florence ; whereupon his Holiness ordered him to write to me to return. The letter was to the effect that I should come back to the service of Clement, and that it would be to my advantage so to do. The young fellows who were with me wanted to know what the letter was all about ; but this I hid from them as best I could ; and afterwards wrote to Maestro Jacopo, begging him on no account to write to me again, for good or ill. But his determination only grew the stronger ; and he wrote to me once more, and in so exaggerated a style, that it would have gone ill with me had it been seen. The letter said the Pope desired me to go to Rome without delay, as he wanted me to undertake a thing of the greatest importance ; and that if I wished to do my duty, I should leave everything else behind me immediately, and not linger to war against a Pope in company with those mad fanatics.

When I read the letter, I was so afraid that I went in search of my dear friend Pier Landi. At the sight of me he asked me at once what had happened that I seemed so worried. I said to my friend that I could not bring myself to tell him what was vexing me. Only, I begged him to take the keys I gave him, and return the jewels and the gold to such and such people, whose names he would find written down in my little book ; also to take away my household things and keep some account of all—with his usual kindness ; and in a few days I should let him know where I was. This shrewd young man, perhaps correctly guessing how things were, said to me, “ My brother, be off with you at once. Then write to me ; and as for your things, don’t give them another thought.” This I did. He was the most faithful, the wisest, worthiest, discreetest, most loving-hearted friend whom I have ever known. Quitting Florence, I went to Rome, and from there I wrote.

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xlivi. As soon as I reached Rome, I sought out some of my old friends, by whom I was welcomed with great affection. I set myself to work, which brought me in some money, but which is not worth describing. Now there was a certain goldsmith in the city, an old fellow called Raffaello del Moro. His reputation in the trade was high, and he was a very good sort of man besides. He begged me to do him the favour of working in his shop, for he had some important works on hand, out of which excellent profits could be made. And I willingly closed with his offer.

More than ten days passed and I had not yet gone to see Maestro Jacopino della Barca. But when he met me by chance he gave me the heartiest greeting, and asked me how long it was since I had come. About a fortnight, I told him. This he took very ill, saying I made very little account of a Pope who, with much insistence, had made him write three times for me ; and I, who had been still more vexed, answered him never a word, swallowing my wrath. He was a man of most fluent speech, and now he burst into a torrent of words. When at last I saw him worn out, I only said he might take me to the Pope whenever he liked. "Any time then," he answered ; and I was always ready, I replied. So off he set towards the palace, I with him, and the day was Maundy Thursday. When we reached the Pope's apartments, we were at once admitted, he being known, and I expected. The Pope was in bed, a little indisposed ; and Messer Jacopo Salviati and the Archbishop of Capua were with him. His Holiness was extraordinarily delighted at the sight of me ; and when I had kissed his feet with all the humility possible, I came nearer, and gave him to know I would fain talk with him of some weighty matters. Immediately he made a sign with his hand, and Messer Jacopo and the Archbishop retired a long way off. Without delay I began, "Most holy Father,

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ever since the sack I have not been able to confess or communicate, for they refuse me absolution. And this is why. When I melted the gold, and had all the trouble of taking the jewels out of their setting, your Holiness ordered Cavalierino to pay me some little money for my pains. But I never got anything. Indeed, he showered abuse on me instead. So going up to the place where I had melted the gold, I washed the ashes, and found about a pound and a half of gold in little grains as fine as millet-seed. And as I had not money enough to take me home in decency, I bethought me to use this, and to return it when I had a chance. Now here I am at the feet of your Holiness, who is the true confessor. Of your favour, grant me leave to go and confess and receive the communion, that by your grace I may regain the grace of the Lord my God."

Then the Pope, with something like a sigh, recalling perhaps his afflictions, said to me, "Benvenuto, most true it is I am what you say, and, therefore, I can absolve you of any offence you may have committed. Likewise I am willing. So tell me everything quite freely, and with good courage ; for had you taken the value of a whole tiara, I am quite willing to pardon you." Then I answered, "I have done no more, most Holy Father, than what I have said ; and it did not come up to the value of a hundred and forty ducats, when I changed it at the mint at Perugia. And that sum I took home to comfort my poor old father." The Pope replied, "Your father was as talented, good, and worthy a man as ever was born ; and you do not in any way disgrace him. I am much vexed the money was so little ; but such as you say it was, I make you a present of it, and pardon you for all. Tell this to your confessor, if you have done nothing else which touches me. Then having confessed and communicated, come again to see me, and your visit shall not be in vain."

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As soon as I had left the Pope, Messer Jacopo and the Archbishop drew near again, and his Holiness spoke to them of me more warmly than I can tell, and told them he had confessed and absolved me. Then he ordered the Archbishop of Capua to send for me to ask if I had any need save in the matter we had spoken of ; and he told him he was to absolve me, for he had full authority so to do, and to treat me with every kindness possible.

On our way back, Maestro Jacopino was full of curiosity, and asked me what I had been talking about so long and secretly with the Pope. When he had repeated his question more than once, I said I should not tell him, for it concerned things that were no business of his, and he need not ask me again.

I did all that I had arranged with the Pope ; and when the two festivals were over, went again to see him. His reception of me was even more kind than before ; and he said, " If you had come to Rome a little earlier, I should have had you repair those two tiaras of mine which we destroyed in the Castle. But as they are of little value apart from the jewels, I'll set you on a work of the greatest importance, where you'll have a chance of showing what you can do. It is a button for my cope, which is to be round like a trencher, and almost as big, that is, about the third of a cubit in diameter. On it I wish you to make a God-the-Father in half relief ; and in the middle I want you to set in that fine diamond you know of and some other valuable jewels. A certain Caradosso once began it, but never finished it. Now I wish you to get it done quickly, for I would fain have some enjoyment out of it still. So go away and make me a good design." He showed me all the jewels, and then I was off home like a shot.

xliv. While Florenee was being laid siege to,

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Federigo Ginori, for whom I had made the medal of Atlas, died of consumption ; and the medal fell into the hands of Messer Luigi Alamanni, who soon after took it as a present to Francis, King of France, together with some of his own finest writings. It pleased the king beyond measure ; and the most ingenious Luigi spoke so favourably to his Majesty of my personal character, as well as of my artistic skill, that the king declared his desire to make my acquaintance.

Just then I was putting my whole energies into the model for the Pope's button, which I made exactly the size the finished work was to be. But many men in the goldsmith's trade resented my being employed on it, for they felt capable of doing the thing themselves. Now there had come to Rome a certain Michelotto, very skilful in engraving on cornelian, a very clever jeweller withal, and a man of years and great reputation. He had undertaken the repair of the Pope's two tiaras. While I was making the model, he was much surprised I did not come to him for advice, he being a very able man, and in great favour with the Pope. In the end, when he saw I did not mean to approach him, he came to me and asked me what I was working at. "On a commission from the Pope," I answered. Then he went on, "The Pope has ordered me to supervise everything that is made for him." To which I replied that I should first ask his Holiness, and then should know what answer to make him. He said I should be sorry if I did this ; and going away from me in a rage, he foregathered with all the others of his trade. When they had talked the matter over, they gave it into the hands of Michele, who was clever enough to get more than thirty designs made by able designers of the button which had been ordered. Now he had the ear of the Pope ; and making a pact with another jeweller called

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Pompeo, a Milan man—also a great favourite of his Holiness, and a relation of Messer Traiano, first chamberlain of the household—these two, to wit, Michele and Pompeo, told Pope Clement they had seen my model, and that in their opinion I was not capable of carrying out so important a thing. The Pope replied that he, too, must see it. Then if I were really not capable, he would find some one who was. Whereupon they told him they had some splendid designs ready. That was a very good thing, said he, but added that he would rather not see them till I had finished mine, when he would inspect them all together. In a few days I had completed my model, and I took it one morning to his Holiness. Messer Traiano made me wait, and sent off at once for Michelotto and Pompeo, bidding them bring their designs. As soon as they had come, we were all shown in. Michele and Pompeo made haste to open out their drawings, and the Pope was just as eager to look at them. Now designers who are not in the jewellers' trade do not know how stones should be placed, and these had not been taught by practical men. For, of course, a jeweller, when he has to introduce figures among his precious stones, must know how to draw and compose a design; otherwise he can do nothing of any worth. So in all those designs the marvellous diamond had been set right in the middle of God-the-Father's breast. The Pope, who had excellent taste, saw this blunder, and had no opinion of them at all. When he had looked at ten, he threw the rest on the floor, and said to me, who was standing aside, "Now, Benvenuto, let's have a glance at yours, that I may see if you have made the same mistake." I stepped forward, and opened a little round box. A light seemed to kindle in the Pope's eye, and he cried aloud, "If you had been my very own self, you must have done it just like this. These fellows could have found no better

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way of shaming themselves." And many great lords coming up, the Pope pointed out the difference between my model and the others' designs.

When he had praised it to the skies, and the rest stood terrified and dazed in the presence, he turned to me with, "But one difficulty occurs to me, and it is no slight matter. Benvenuto, my friend, wax is easy to work in. The point is to do it in gold." To this I replied eagerly, "Most holy Father, if I do not do it ten times better than my model here, it is agreed you do not pay me." Hereupon there arose cries from the courtiers standing round; for they said I was promising too much. But one of them, a very great philosopher, spoke up for me, saying, "If I may judge from this young man's countenance and the symmetry of his person, he will do all that he says, and more." And the Pope rejoined, "That's why I, too, have confidence in him." And calling his chamberlain, Messer Traiano, he bade him bring five hundred gold ducats of the Camera. While we were waiting for the money, he again, and more at leisure, examined my ingenious method of employing the diamond with the God-the-Father. I had placed it exactly in the middle, and above it I had represented the Almighty seated in a noble posture, turned away somewhat from the spectator. This was a harmonious arrangement, and did not destroy the effect of the jewel. With His right hand held up, He was giving the benediction. Beneath the diamond I had placed three cherubs, supporting the stone with their uplifted arms. The middle one was in high relief, the other two in half. Round about were others, variously arranged with the rest of the fine jewels. God-the-Father had a floating mantle, from which my little cherubs peeped out; and there were other charming decorations besides, each adding to the exquisite result. I had made the thing in white stucco on

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black stone. When the money was brought, the Pope gave it to me with his own hand, and in his pleasantest manner begged me to finish the button so that it might be worn in his days ; adding that it would be a good thing for me.

xlv. I carried off the money and the model ; and it seemed to me an age till I could put my hand to the work. At the end of eight eager and laborious days, the Pope sent his chamberlain, a very great Bolognese nobleman, with a message that I was to go to him and take with me what I had done. On our way this chamberlain, who was the most agreeable person about the Court, told me it was not altogether to see the work that the Pope had sent for me. He meant also to give me another thing to do of the greatest importance, namely, the making of dies for the money of the Roman Mint. I had better be prepared with an answer to his Holiness ; and for that reason he had warned me. On being admitted to the Pope, I displayed the thin gold plate, on which was fashioned as yet only the God-the-Father. But this first sketch showed more strength and skill than the wax model, so that the Pope cried in his astonishment, "From this day forward I am willing to believe whatever you tell me." Then he paid me the most extravagant compliments, and added, "I want to give you another commission which I have as much at heart as this one—nay, more—if you are able to undertake it." Then he told me of his great desire to have dies made for his money ; asked me if I had ever made any, and if I was bold enough to attempt such a thing. I replied that I was most willing, that I had seen how such things were done, though I had never made them. In the presence was a certain Messer Tommaso of Prato, datary to his Holiness. Now he was very thick with my enemies, and so he said, "Most holy Father, you heap such favours on this young man,

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who is naturally over-confident, that he would promise to remake the world for you. Already you have given him one big piece of work ; now you add a bigger, and one will fight against the other." The Pope turned on him in a rage, telling him to mind his own business. Then he ordered me to make a model of a broad golden doubloon. On one side was to be a Christ, naked, with His hands tied, and the legend *Ecce Homo* ; on the reverse a pope and an emperor, both of them propping a cross on the point of falling, with the inscription, *Unus spiritus et una fides erat in eis*. When the Pope had given me the commission for this beautiful coin, in came Bandinello the sculptor, who was not yet made a knight, and with his wonted presumption clothed in ignorance, he said, "When these goldsmiths get such fine work to do, one has to find designs for them." At which I turned on him, saying I had no need of his help in my art, but had good hope, in time, with my designs to trouble him a bit in his own business. The Pope was as delighted as possible with these words, and said to me, "Go now, my Benvenuto, and give all your mind to serving me, and pay no heed to what fools say." So I went away, and with all the speed in the world made two steel dies. Then having stamped a coin, I carried them all to the Pope one Sunday after dinner. When he saw them he was astounded, and his great satisfaction was not merely on account of the fine work, but also for the quickness of my execution. And to add to his pleasure and wonder, I had brought with me all the old coins which had been made in the past by those skilful men who had served Pope Julius and Pope Leo. Seeing he was much more pleased with mine, I drew out of my bosom a petition asking for the office of Stampmaster to the Mint. It was worth six golden crowns a month, without counting the dies, which

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were paid by the Master of the Mint at a ducat for three. The Pope took my petition, and giving it into the hands of the datary, told him to see to the business at once. The datary took the paper, but as he was putting it in his pocket, he said, "Most holy Father, your Holiness should not go at such a furious pace. These are matters that merit some consideration." Then the Pope answered, "I have heard you. Now give me back the petition." And taking it, he signed it with his own hand, and returned it with the words, "There, the thing is settled. Hasten the matter; such is my will—for Benvenuto's shoes are worth more than the eyes of all those other dull idiots." So having thanked his Holiness, I went off to my work in the highest spirits.

xlvi. I was still working in the shop of Raffaello del Moro, whom I have spoken of. Now the good man had a fair young daughter, for whom he had his eye on me. And I, half aware of this, was quite willing. But while inwardly cherishing the desire, I showed nothing of it to the world. Indeed, so distant was I in my courtesies that he wondered at me. Now this poor child had a disease in her right hand, which had eaten into the bones of the little finger and the next one. Through the heedlessness of her father, she was attended by an ignorant quack, who said her whole right arm would be maimed, even if nothing worse came to pass. When I saw her poor father appalled at the prospect, I told him I did not believe all the ignorant doctor said. He replied that he had no acquaintance with any doctors or surgeons; and begged me, if I knew of one, to call him in. Without delay I sent for a certain Maestro Giacomo of Perugia, a most distinguished surgeon. The poor young girl was in despair, having guessed the verdict of the quack; but when the man of skill had seen her, he said, on the contrary, that no harm

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would come of the thing, and that she would be perfectly able to use her right hand ; and that though the two last fingers might be a little weaker than the others, this would not matter in the least. So he began his treatment ; and when, after a few days, he was about to cut out the diseased portions of the bones, the father called me and asked me to look on while this was being done. For his operation Maestro Giacomo used some rough steel instruments. Seeing that with these he made little way, and hurt the girl terribly, I told him to stop and to wait a few minutes for me. So I ran to the shop, and made a little tool of finest steel, curved, thin as a hair, and sharp as a razor. Then I ran back with it to the Maestro, who began to operate so gently that she felt no pain ; and in a short time the thing was finished. For this service, and for other reasons, too, the worthy man conceived a greater affection for me than for his two sons. And so it was he set himself in good earnest to the care of his lovely young daughter.

I had a very good friend in Messer Giovanni Gaddi, a clerk of the Camera, who took the greatest delight in the arts, though he had no talent for them himself. Living with him were Messer Giovanni, a very learned Greek ; Messer Lodovico da Fano, another man of learning ; Messer Antonio Allegretti ; and the young Messer Annibal Caro. Belonging to this society, though not of the household, were Messer Bastiano the Venetian, a most eminent painter, and myself ; and nearly every day we saw each other at Messer Giovanni's. So it came about that the worthy goldsmith Raffaello, aware of this friendship, said to Messer Giovanni, "My friend, you know me. Now I want to marry my young daughter to Benvenuto ; and as I can think of no better go-between than your honour, I beg you to help me, and to settle as it please you what portion of my property shall be her dowry." Hardly had the good fellow finished speaking when

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the scatter-brained fool broke in, in the most purposeless fashion, with " Speak no more of this, Raffaello, for you are farther from your end than is January from mulberries." So his hopes being dashed, the poor man tried to marry her to some one else ; and the mother, the girl herself, indeed the whole family, were angry with me, while I knew nothing of the reason. When I saw I was only getting bad money for all the courtesy with which I had treated them, I made up my mind to open a shop in their neighbourhood. And Messer Giovanni never told me a word of the matter till the girl was married, which took place a few months later.

In the meantime I was striving hard to finish my work, and was serving the Mint the while ; for the Pope again gave me an order for a coin of the value of two carlins. His own head was to be stamped on the face ; and on the reverse, a Christ upon the waters stretching out His hand to St. Peter, with the legend, *Quare dubitasti?* This coin gave so much satisfaction that a certain secretary of the Pope, a very able man called Il Sanga, said : " Your Holiness may congratulate yourself on having such coins as the ancients, with all their splendour, never possessed." Whereupon the Pope replied, " And Benvenuto, too, is fortunate in serving an Emperor like me, who know his talents." While I was working at the great gold piece, I showed it often to the Pope, for he entreated me so to do, and every time he saw it he was more astonished.

xlvii. My brother was now also in Rome, in the service of Duke Alessandro, to whom the Pope had lately given the duchy of Penna, and who attached to himself a number of right valiant soldiers, trained in the school of that distinguished captain, Giovanni de' Medici. My brother was of this company, and by the Duke esteemed among the best. Well, after dinner one day, he went to the shop of Baccino della Croce, in the Banks, which was a

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gathering-place of these braves. There sitting down on a seat, he fell asleep. Just then passed by the Bargello guards, conducting a certain Captain Cisti, a Lombard, to prison. He, too, had been of the school of the great Lord Giovannino, but was not now in the service of the Duke. Captain Cattivanza degli Strozzi happened to be also in Baccino della Croce's shop. Cisti caught sight of him, and said to him in passing, "I was bringing you some crowns I owed you ; if you want them, come for them before they lock me up." Now Cattivanza loved to egg others on, though he would not risk much himself ; so seeing several young fellows of spirit, more ready to dare than fit to embark on such an adventure, he bade them step up to Captain Cisti and make him give them the money. Should the guard resist, they were to defy it, if they had spirit enough. There were only four of these youths, and all four beardless. One was called Bertino Aldobrandi, another Anguillotto, of Lucea. The names of the others I cannot recall. Now Bertino had been trained by my brother, who felt the warmest affection for him. So, behold the four plucky young fellows coming up with the Bargello guards, who were more than fifty, and armed with pikes, arquebuses, and two-handed swords. Wasting but few words, the four put their hands to their weapons, and so harassed the guards, that had Captain Cattivanza but shown himself, even had he never drawn his sword, they would have put the gang to flight. But he delayed, and Bertino was wounded sorely, and he fell. Then Anguillotto at the same moment was wounded in the right arm, and no longer able to hold his sword, he retired as well as he could. The others did the same, and Bertino Aldobrandi was lifted from the ground in a serious condition.

xlviii. While all this was happening we were at table, for that morning we were dining more

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than an hour later than usual. Hearing the noise, one of the sons, the elder, Giovanni by name, rose to go and see the fight. I called to him, "For God's sake, don't go! There's always something to lose and nothing to gain in rows of that sort." And his father, too, said, "My son, I beg you not to go." But the youth would listen to none of us, and ran downstairs. Reaching the Banks, where the fight was going on, he saw Bertino being lifted from the ground. Then he turned and ran back. But on the way he met Cecchino, my brother, who asked him what was up. Some of the people standing by signed to Giovanni not to tell; but like the mad fool he was, he blurted out that Bertino Aldobrandi had been murdered by the guard. My poor brother set up such a roar you might have heard it ten miles off. Then he said to Giovanni, "Ah, could you but tell me which of them has been the death of my friend!" Giovanni answered, "Yes; it was a man with a two-handed sword and a blue feather in his cap." On rushed my poor brother, and recognising the murderer by these signs, he threw himself with all his marvellous agility and dash into the midst of the guards; and ere his particular enemy could help himself, he struck him in the belly, ran him through, and felled him to the ground with his sword-hilt. Then he turned on the others with such skill and fire that he alone would have put the whole of them to flight, had he not wheeled round to have at an arquebusier, who, to defend himself, let off his gun and hit the brave unlucky youth just above the right knee. As soon as he had fallen, the scattered guards made off in haste, lest another, like unto this assailant, should come up. Hearing that the tumult still continued, I, too, rose from table, and girt on my sword—for every man carried one in those days. At the Santo Agnolo bridge I saw a large group of men. I

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pushed on, and being known to some of them, place was made for me; and I saw the last thing in the world I would have seen—yet there I was, all eagerness to look. At first I did not recognise him, for he was dressed in different clothes from those I had seen him in a little while before. So it was he that first knew me, and said, “Dearest brother, do not lament my evil case, for in my profession I was bound to look for this. Only let me be taken away from here at once, for I have but a little while to live.” While he was speaking they told me all that had happened, with the brevity the case called for. Then I replied, “Brother, this is the greatest grief, the greatest evil that can ever befall me. But be of good heart, for before you lose sight of him who wrought you this hurt, you shall see yourself revenged by my hands.” His words and mine were to this clear effect, but of the briefest.

xlix. The guard was now fifty paces off, for Maffio, their captain, had made a portion of them turn back to take away the body of the corporal whom my brother had killed. So hurrying along, wrapped round closely in my mantle, I came up with Maffio. Of a certainty I was near killing him, for the crowd was thick enough, and I was in the midst of it. Quick as lightning I had drawn my sword half out of its scabbard, when Berlinghier Berlinghieri, a most valorous young man, and a great friend of mine, seized my arms from behind. Four other young fellows were with him, and they cried to Maffio, “Off with you, for this man by himself was on the point of killing you.” “Who is he?” asked Maffio. “Brother of the man you see lying there,” they answered. Having heard quite enough, the captain retired to the Torre di Nona as fast as possible, and my friend, turning to me, said, “Benvenuto, we kept you back against your will, but we did it for your good. Now let us go and

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help him who is shortly to die." So we went back to my brother, whom I had carried into a house. The doctors consulted together and treated him, but they could not make up their minds to cut off his leg, else they might perchance have saved him.

As soon as the wound had been seen to, Duke Alessandro appeared, and spoke words of kindly affection ; and my brother, who was still clear in his mind, said to him : " My lord, for nothing do I grieve save that your Excellency loses a servant who might be excelled in valour in his profession, but than whom none ever served you with more love and faithfulness." The Duke bade him make up his mind to live ; as for the rest, well did he know him for a man of worth and valour. Then turning to the men who were with him, he told them to let the gallant youth want for nothing. After the Duke had gone, Cecchino became delirious from the great flow of blood which could not be staunched ; so that all next night he was quite frenzied, save that when they wished to give him the communion, he said, " You would have done well to confess me before. Now it is not possible for me to receive the divine sacrament in this wrecked body of mine. Be satisfied that I receive it with the divinity of the eyes, through which it shall reach my immortal soul, which begs mercy and pardon of God." When he had said these words, the host was raised ; but he fell at once into the same delirium as before—nay, his ravings grew still worse, and he uttered the most horrible words imaginable all that night till day-break. As the sun rose above the horizon, he turned to me and said, " My brother, I will stay no longer here, for these people will drive me to what will make them repent having meddled with me." Then he flung out both legs, and raised the injured one (which we had placed in a very heavy box) as if he were about to mount his horse. Turning his face to

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me, he said three times, “ Adieu ! adieu ! adieu ! ” and with the last word that valiant soul passed out.

At the appointed hour, which was evening, at twenty-two of the clock, I had him buried with the greatest honour in the Church of the Florentines ; and later I raised to him a beautiful marble monument, on which were cut trophies and banners. I must not forget to say that, when one of his friends asked him which of the arquebusiers shot him, and if he recognised him, he said yes, and he described the man. Although my brother took precautions against my hearing this, yet I had heard it perfectly ; and in the proper place I shall tell what came of it.

I. To return to the stone. Certain very distinguished men of letters, who knew my brother, brought me an epigram, which they said the admirable young man had merited. It ran thus :—*Francisco Cellino Florentino, qui quod in teneris annis ad Joannem Medicem ducem plures victorias retulit et signifer fuit, facile documentum dedit quantæ fortitudinis et consilii vir futurus erat, ni crudelis fati archibuso transfossus, quinto aetatis lustro jaceret, Benvenutus frater posuit. Obiit die xxvii Maii, MDXXIX.* He was twenty-five years old. Now because among the soldiers he was called Cecchino del Pifero—his real name being Giovanfrancesco Cellini—I wished to have the name by which he was commonly known written under our arms. So I had it cut in fine antique letters, which were all broken save the first and last. I was asked by those men of learning who had made the fine epitaph for me, the reason of the broken letters ; and I said because that wonderful machine, his body, was wrecked and dead. And as for the two entire letters, the first was in memory of that great gift from God, his soul, lit up by His divinity, the which was never broken ; the last was for the glorious fame of his valorous deeds. This conceit pleased them very

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much ; and since then others have made use of the same device. Near the name I cut on the stone the arms of our house of Cellini, which, however, I did not follow quite exactly. For, as may be seen in Ravenna, that most ancient city, where there are Cellinis of honourable and gentle quality, the arms are a golden lion rampant on a field of azure, clasping a lily gules in its right paw, with a label-in-chief and three little lilies or. These are the real Cellini arms. My father showed me a scutcheon which had only the paw along with the other bearings ; but I like better to keep to that of the Ravenna Cellinis. To return to what I carved on my brother's tomb. I put in the lion's paw, but it grasped a hatchet instead of the lily, with the field of the arms quartered ; and the hatchet was there only that I might not forget to revenge him.

li. I worked with the utmost energy to finish the gold work for Pope Clement, which he was in a great hurry for. Two or three times a week would he call me, so much did he want to see it, and each time he was better pleased. But frequently he reproved me, almost scolding me for my deep gloom on account of my brother's death ; and still seeing me more overcome and wretched than was right, he said, one day, "Oh, Benvenuto, I did not know you were demented. Haven't you learnt before now that for death there is no remedy ? You are doing your best to follow him."

I took my leave of the Pope, and went on with my gold work and the dies for the Mint ; but now better to me than courting a sweetheart was watching that arquebusier who had killed my brother. This man had once been a light cavalry soldier, and then had enlisted as arquebusier among the Bargello's corporals. Now what added to my wrath was that he boasted of the thing, saying, "If it hadn't been for me, who killed that brave young fellow, in another

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minute, he, by himself, would have put us all to flight, with great damage, too." At last I saw that my suffering, caused by the constant sight of him, was hindering me from sleeping and from eating, and leading me along an evil road. I stifled the thought of how low and dishonourable the undertaking was, and one evening I resolved once and for all to be done with the trouble. The man lived near a place called Torre Sanguigna, next door to a house where lodged one of the most favourite courtesans of Rome, called Signora Antea. The clock had just struck twenty-four. The arquebusier stood in the doorway after supper, sword in hand. I crept up stealthily, and with a Pistojan dagger dealt him a back stroke, thinking to cut his head right off. But he wheeled round suddenly, and the blow fell on the top of his left shoulder, cleaving the bone. Up he sprang, and dazed by the sore pain, he threw aside his sword, and began to run. I followed after, and came up with him in a step or two. Then raising my dagger above his bent head, I struck him on the nape of the neck, and the weapon went in so deep that I could not for all my efforts draw it out. For just then out of Antea's house came four soldiers clutching their swords, so that I was forced to handle mine to defend myself from them. Leaving my dagger sticking there, I made off, for fear of being recognised, to Duke Alessandro's house, between the Piazza Navona and the Rotunda. As soon as I got there I told the Duke, who gave me to understand that, if I was alone, I had only to keep quiet and all should be well. I was to go on with the Pope's work, since he was so anxious to have it ; and for eight days I had better work within doors. The soldiers who had stopped me, had now arrived, and were relating the whole affair ; they had the dagger in their hands, and told the great trouble they had had to pull it out of the neck-bone and head of the dead man, whose name

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they did not know. At this up came Giovan Bandini and said to them, "This dagger is mine, and I lent it to Benvenuto, who wanted to revenge his brother." Then the soldiers could not say enough of their regret at having interrupted me, though, indeed, I had got my fill of revenge.

More than eight days passed, and the Pope did not send for me as was his wont ; but at last he begged his chamberlain, the Bolognese nobleman of whom I have already spoken, to go and fetch me. With the utmost courtesy, the messenger told me that his Holiness knew everything, that he wished me well in every way, and that I was to go on working and keep quiet. Nevertheless, when I was admitted, he glowered : his eyes alone were enough to scare me. But when he examined my work, his face softened ; he heaped praises on me, and said I had done a very great deal in very little time. Then looking me straight in the face, he added, "Now that you have recovered, Benvenuto, give heed to your way of life." And I catching his meaning, said I would do so. Without delay I opened a handsome shop in the Banks, opposite Raffaello's, and there in a few months' time I finished the piece of work I had in hand.

lii. The Pope had sent me all the jewels except the diamond, which in an hour of need he had pledged to some Genoese bankers. So I had all the other stones, but only a model of the diamond. I kept five excellent journeymen ; for besides this piece of work I was doing a great deal of other business, so that the shop was crammed with valuable property, jewels, and gold, and silver. Now I kept a hairy dog in the house, a big, handsome creature which had been given me by Duke Alessandro. Though he was really a hunting dog, good for picking up all sorts of birds and other creatures when I was out shooting, yet he was wonderfully useful, too, as a watch dog. Now it happened about this time that (allowing myself the

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privileges of my age, which was nine and twenty) I had engaged a very beautiful and graceful girl as my servant. I used her as a model in my work, and also enjoyed her favours. So I had my room apart from those of my workmen, and far away from the shop, and joined by an ante-room to the little hole which belonged to the young servant-maid. I used often to be with her ; and though I sleep as lightly as any man, yet on such occasions my slumber was very heavy and deep. So it was one night in particular. Now a thief, who had given himself out to be a goldsmith, had been watching me, had cast an eye upon the jewels, and made up his mind to rob me. So this night he ransacked the shop, and found a number of little gold and silver articles. But while he was in the act of breaking open some boxes to find the jewels, the dog rushed at him, and it was all he could do to defend himself with his sword. Then the creature ran hither and thither about the house, and entered the workmen's rooms, which were open, for it was summer time. When, for all his loud barking, they would not awake, he pulled the coverlets off them. And when still they would not hear, he seized one after another by the arm till he forced them to look up. Then barking with all his might, he tried to make them follow him. But at last he saw they would not, for the villains got angry, and began to throw stones and sticks at the dog. This they could see to do, for by my orders they kept a light burning all night. Then in the end they shut their doors, and the creature giving up all hope or help from the rascals, set himself alone to the adventure. Down he ran, only to find the thief had left the shop. But he found him, and struggling with him, tore the cloak from his back ; and who knows what else would have happened, if the man had not called on some tailors to help him, begging them for the love of God to defend him from a mad dog.

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Thinking he spoke the truth, they rushed out and with great trouble drove the beast off.

Day broke, and when the workmen came down to the shop they found it open, everything in confusion, and all the cases broken into. Then they began to call aloud, "Alack-a-day! alack-a-day!" and I, hearing this, and alarmed at the noise, ran out. When I appeared, they cried, "Oh, unhappy men that we are! We have been robbed by someone who has broken all the cases, and taken everything away!" These words wrought so strongly on me that I had not the courage to go to my chest to see if the Pope's jewels were still there. Indeed, such was my terror, that bewildered and almost blinded, I told them instead to open the box and see what was missing. The young men, who were all in their shirts, opened the chest and found all the jewels and with them the gold article I was working on. Then overjoyed, they cried out, "There's no great harm done, for your work and the jewels are all here—though the thief has left us nothing but our shirts; for last night we all undressed in the shop on account of the great heat, and we left our clothes here." My strength then came back to me, and I said to my men, "Thank God all of you; and clothe yourselves anew, and I shall pay for everything when I have heard the whole story more at leisure."

What troubled me most,—what, indeed, bewildered and terrified me, on whom fear is not wont to have much hold, was the thought that people might say I had made up the story of the robber only that I might steal the jewels. For, indeed, Pope Clement had been warned by some of his most intimate friends, such as Francesco del Nero, Zana de' Biliotti, his accountant, the Bishop of Vaison, and others of that sort, who said to him, "Most holy Father, how can you trust jewels of such value to a reckless, fiery young man, who is more immersed in

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arms than in art, and is not yet thirty years old ? ” To this the Pope replied by asking if they knew of my having done anything which would give colour to such suspicions. Francesco del Nero, his treasurer, at once replied, “ No, most holy Father, because he has never had a chance.” Whereupon the Pope answered, “ I believe him to be honest through and through, and even did I see him do wrong, I should not believe my eyes.” So this was the thing which troubled me most, and which I now suddenly recalled.

When I had made provision for the young men’s new clothes, I took my piece of work, setting the jewels as best I could in their places, and went off with them in all haste to the Pope. Francesco del Nero had told him of the noises which had been heard in my shop, and his suspicions had been roused at once. Rushing to the conclusion that some misfortune had occurred, he turned a terrible look on me, and said in a haughty voice, “ What have you come here for ? What is the matter ? ” “ Here are all your jewels and the gold ! Not a thing is missing,” I cried. At that his face cleared, and he said, “ Then you are welcome.” I showed him the gold piece, and while he was looking at it, I told him all about the thief and my anxieties, and what had been my greatest worry. While I was speaking, he turned several times and looked me straight in the face, and as Francesco del Nero was also with him, it seemed as if he half regretted his suspicions. In the end the Pope burst out laughing at all the things I had to tell him, and as he took leave of me said, “ Be off, and see that you remain the honest fellow I know you for.”

liii. While I was engaged on the Pope’s commission, and working steadily for the Mint as well, there began to circulate in Rome certain false coins stamped with my own special dies. They were

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immediately brought to the Pope, who, when suspicion was cast on me, said to Jacopo Balducci, the Master of the Mint, “Do your very utmost to find the culprit, for we know that Benvenuto is an honest man.” But this rascally Mint-master, who was my enemy, rejoined, “Please God, most holy Father, that it be as you say, for we have reason to think the contrary.” Whereupon the Pope turned to the governor of Rome, and ordered him to take immediate steps to find the guilty man. While the inquiries were being made, he sent for me; cunningly led up to the question of the coins, and just at the right moment, said, “Benvenuto, would you dare to make false money?” To this I answered that I believed I could do it better than any of the men engaged in the vile trade; for those who betake themselves to that mean business are not such as know how to earn money, nor have they any real talent, whereas I, with my poor wits, earned as much as I needed. For when I made dies for the Mint, every morning before dinner I had earned at least three crowns—such was the usual payment; and indeed that rascal of a Mint-master bore me no goodwill, because he would fain have got them cheaper. Thus what I gained by God’s grace and men’s favour was quite enough for me; and in making false coins I should not come off so well. The Pope saw clearly what I meant; and whereas before he had ordered them to watch shrewdly lest I should leave Rome, now he said they were to make thorough search for the real culprit, and to leave me out of the business; for he had no wish to vex me, and thus perhaps to lose my services. Those to whom he gave these peremptory orders were clerks of the Camera, who set about the search with due diligence, in accordance with their duty, and found the culprit without delay. He was a stamper of the Mint, called Ceseri Macherone, a citizen of Rome.

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His accomplice, a metal-founder, also in the service of the Mint, was arrested along with him.

liv. On that same day I happened to be passing through the Piazzo Navona with my fine dog. I had reached the Bargello gate when the creature gave a great bound, and, barking loudly, dashed in at the opening and threw himself on a young man, who had just been arrested on suspicion of robbing a certain Donnino, a Parma goldsmith, once a pupil of Caradosso. My dog was evidently so bent on tearing him savagely to pieces that the police were moved to pity ; and the more so as the bold young fellow had plenty to say for himself, and Donnino could not make out a clear case against him. Besides, one of the corporals of the guards, a Genoese, knew the youth's father. So what between the dog and these other circumstances, they were in a mind to let the fellow go his way without hindrance. But as soon as I came up, the dog, afraid of neither swords nor sticks, was throwing itself again on him ; and I was told that if I did not take the beast away, they would murder it. I tugged at the creature as hard as I could ; but while the young man was pulling up his cloak, some little paper packets fell out of the hood, and Donnino recognised in them some things of his. I, too, caught sight of a little ring I knew well, and cried out, " This is the man who broke into my shop and robbed me. That's why my dog knows him again." I let go the dog, and he flew at the fellow once more. Then the thief pleaded with me, promising to return what he had of mine. So while I held the dog fast, he gave up all the gold and silver and rings he had stolen, and five and twenty crowns besides. Then he begged for mercy, whereat I advised him to recommend himself to God, saying I should do him nor harm nor good. Then I went back to my business. A few days after, Ceseri Macherone, the coiner, was hanged in the Banks, in front of the door of the

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Mint, and his companion was sent to the galleys. The Genoese robber was hanged in the Campo di Fiore ; and my fame as an honest man was higher than ever before.

lv. I had just nearly finished my work when the huge inundation took place which flooded the whole of Rome. The day was waning as I stood watching it. Twenty-two o'clock had just struck, and I saw the water rising very fast. Now the front of my house and shop was towards the Banks ; but the back was several cubits higher, and looked towards Monte Giordano. So thinking first of my safety, and then of my honour, I secured all the jewels on my person, and left my gold work in the keeping of my workmen. Then, barefoot, I got down through my back window, and, as well as I could, waded through the water till I found myself at Monte Cavallo, where I found Messer Giovanni Gaddi, clerk of the Camera, and Bastiano Veneziano, the painter. Greeting Messer Giovanni, I gave all the jewels into his custody ; for he looked on me as his brother. A few days later, when the fury of the flood had passed, I went back to my shop, and finished my work so happily, by God's help and my own efforts, that it was held to be the finest thing of the kind ever seen in Rome. When I took it to the Pope, he could not sing my praises loud enough. "If I were a rich emperor," said he, "I would give my Benvenuto all the land his eyes could run over. But we in these days are poor bankrupt princes ; nevertheless, we shall give him bread sufficient for his little wants." I let him chatter his fill ; and then I asked him for a mace-bearer's place which was vacant. On which he said he wanted to give me something far more important than that. But I begged his Holiness to give me this little thing in the meanwhile as a pledge. He burst out laughing, and said he was willing, but he did not want me to serve ; and he bade me arrange

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with the other mace-bearers that I should be exempt. Then he granted the favour which they had already asked of him, namely, leave to make legal claim for their salaries. This was done. And out of the mace-bearer's post I made little less than two hundred crowns a year.

lvi. I continued to work for the Pope, now in little things, now in big ; and one day he ordered me to design a splendid chalice for him. For this I made both a drawing and a model in wood and wax. For the knob of the lid I had conceived three little figures of a fair size, in the round—Faith, Hope, and Charity,—and for the stand, three corresponding designs, modelled in low relief, one being the Nativity of Christ, another the Resurrection, the third St. Peter crucified with his head downwards—for so was I ordered to do the thing. While I was at work on this, the Pope was always wanting to see it. But as his Holiness had never remembered to give me anything, and as a post in the Fraternity of the Piombo was vacant, one evening I asked him for it. The good Pope, quite forgetting his wild eulogy of me when I had finished the other pieces of work, said, “The place in the Piombo is worth more than eight hundred crowns, so that if I give it to you, you'll do nothing but sit and scratch yourself in the sun ; and then your fine dexterity of hand will all be wasted, and the blame will be mine.” Whereupon I broke out that cats of good breed hunt better fat than lean, and honest men use their talents to better purpose when they have enough to live on. “And so let it be known unto your Holiness,” I continued, “that those princes who generously maintain such men, give increase to their talents, which are born starveling and diseased ; know, likewise, that I did not ask for the place thinking to obtain it. I am lucky enough to have that wretched mace-bearer's post. I only played with the fancy of having this one. And your

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Holiness will do well, since he does not wish me to have it, to give it to an able and deserving man, and not to some great lazy lubber, who will sit and scratch himself in the sun, to use your Holiness's own words. Take example from Pope Julius of happy memory, who gave just such an office to Bramante, the distinguished architect." And hastily doing him reverence, I went off in a rage.

Then there came into him Bastiano Veneziano, the painter, who said, "Most holy Father, let your Holiness be pleased to give the place to one who is zealous in his art. Now you know my zeal, and I beg that you will deem me worthy of it." Said the Pope, "That devil of a Benvenuto will not brook being spoken to. I was disposed to give it to him, but he shouldn't be so haughty with a Pope. So I am not sure what I shall do." At that moment in came the Bishop of Vaison, who pleaded for Bastiano, saying, "Most holy Father, Benvenuto is young, and a sword by his side befits him better than a friar's frock. Let your Holiness be pleased to give the place to this worthy man Bastiano, and at another time you can give Benvenuto something which perhaps may suit him better than this." Then the Pope turned to Messer Bartolommeo Valori, and said, "When you meet Benvenuto, tell him from me that it is his own fault that Bastiano the painter has got the post in the Piombo. But also let him know that the first good thing vacant shall be his. In the meantime he is to conduct himself well and finish my work." Next evening, two hours after night-fall, I met Messer Bartolommeo Valori at the corner of the Mint. Two torch-bearers were walking in front of him, and he was in a tremendous hurry, having been called to the Pope. But when I saluted him, he stopped and called my name, and with the greatest courtesy told me all his Holiness's message. I replied that I should go on with my work with

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even greater diligence and zeal than I had shown before, but quite without hope of reward. Then he reproved me, saying this was not the way to respond to the overtures of a Pope. To which I answered that, knowing his promises to be empty, I should be a fool, were I to build my hopes on such words, or to give any other reply. And so I left him, and went to attend to my business. Now Messer Bartolommeo must have repeated my hot words, and perhaps he added to them, so that for more than two months the Pope never sent for me ; and in all that time I would not have gone to the palace for anything in the world. But his Holiness was dying to have the work, and so he ordered Messer Roberto Pucci to look after me a bit. That good fellow came every day to see me, and had always a kindly word for me, as I had for him. The day was drawing near when the Pope was to go to Bologna. Perceiving at last that I would not go to him of my own accord, he sent me word by Messer Roberto that I was to bring my work, for he wished to see how I had got on. This I did, and having proved that the greater part was done, I begged him to give me five hundred crowns, part in payment of the work, and the rest to procure gold to finish it. "Get on with it first," said he ; "make haste and have done with it." I repeated that I would complete it, if he provided me with money ; and so I took my leave.

lvii. When the Pope went away to Bologna, he left Cardinal Salviati his legate in Rome ; and he ordered him to harry me about the work, saying, "Benvenuto is a man who thinks little of his own talent, and still less of us. Therefore, see that you keep him at the work, that I may find it complete on my return." So that brute of a cardinal sent for me at the end of eight days, telling me to bring the thing ; whereupon I went to him, but without the

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chalice. When I was before him, he broke out with, "Where's that rubbish heap of yours? Is it ready?" To which I replied, "O most reverend monsignor, it is not ready—nor is it likely to be so. Can one make bricks without straw?" At these words the Cardinal, who looked more like an ass than a human being, became uglier than ever, and cut into my answer with, "I'll send you to the galleys, and you'll have the chance of finishing it there." I answered the beast according to his beastliness, and said, "Monsignor, when I have committed a crime worthy of the galleys, you shall send me there; but for my present sins I don't fear your galleys. Moreover, I tell you that, just because of your lordship's meddling, I'll not do a stroke more work on the thing. So don't send for me again. This is the last you'll see of me, were you to send the guards to fetch me." The Cardinal afterwards adopted a coaxing tone, trying several times to show me it was my duty to continue the work, and to bring it up for inspection. But I answered his messengers, "Tell Monsignor to send me the straw if he wishes me to finish my bricks"; and never another word did I answer, so that he gave up the business as a bad job.

lviii. When the Pope came back from Bologna, he asked for me at once, for the Cardinal had written the worst report possible of what I was about. In the greatest fury imaginable he sent word to me to come and show him the work; and I did so. Now while the Pope had been absent, I had had such a serious attack of inflammation in the eyes, that I almost died of the pain. That was the reason why I had not gone forward with the work. So much did I suffer that I thought of a certainty I should lose my sight. Indeed, I had been calculating how much would suffice me to live on when I should be blind. Well, on my way to see the Pope I thought of how I could excuse myself for not having been

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able to get on with the work, and I determined, while his Holiness was examining the thing, to tell him about my case. But I had no chance of doing so, for at my entrance he burst out rudely, "Here with your work! Is it finished?" So I began unwrapping it. Then with still greater fury he cried, "God's truth! you brag of not caring a rap for anybody. I tell you that, if it weren't for the example of the thing, I'd throw you and your work out of the window!" Seeing that he was in a beast of a temper, my one thought was to remove myself from his presence; and while he was still hectoring, I put the thing under my cloak, muttering, "Nothing in the world could force a blind man to finish a piece of work like that;" whereat he roared still louder, "Come here! What are you saying?" I was in two minds whether I should rush headlong downstairs or not; but I decided to stay, and, throwing myself on my knees, I cried out lustily—for he was roaring all the time—"And when I have become blind, am I still forced to work?" Whereupon he answered, "But you saw well enough to find your way here; and I don't believe a word you tell me!" Then when he had begun to speak in a calmer voice, I answered, "Let your Holiness ask his own doctor, and he will learn the truth." "At our leisure we shall find out if things be as you say," he rejoined. Perceiving by this that he was giving some heed to me at last, I went on, "The sole cause of my serious malady, according to my belief, is Cardinal Salviati. For as soon as your Holiness had gone away, he sent for me, and when I had come he called my work a rubbish heap, and said he would make me finish it in the galleys. And so did his insolent words affect me, that in my wild passion I felt my face on fire, and such a tremendous heat seized on my eyes that I could hardly find my way home. Then a few days after, two cataracts appeared, and I saw no light at

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all. Therefore, after your departure I was able to get no work done." Rising from my knees, I took my leave, and afterwards was told that the Pope said, "Give orders as one may, one cannot give discretion with them. I never told the Cardinal to put such heat into the business ; and if it be true that Benvenuto has something the matter with his eyes, which I shall learn from my doctor, one must have some pity on him." Now there was in the presence a great friend of the Pope, a most distinguished person. He asked his Holiness what manner of man I was. "I ask you, most blessed Father, because it seemed to me you were at once more angry than I have ever seen you and more indulgent. That is why I ask you who he is. For if he deserves to be helped, I can let him into a secret which will cure his malady." So the Pope replied, "He is the greatest master in his profession, and one day when you are with me, I shall let you see some wonderful work of his. I'll show you himself at the same time, and if you see you can do him some good, I shall be much pleased." So three days later the Pope sent for me after dinner, and when I arrived this nobleman was with him. His Holiness bade my cope button be fetched, and in the meanwhile I drew out my chalice. The nobleman said he had never seen so wonderful a work ; and when the button was brought, his wonder grew still more, and, looking me in the face, he said, "He is young to know so much, and still most apt to learn." Then he asked my name. "Benvenuto is my name," I replied. To which he answered, "Benvenuto shall I now be to you. Take fleur-de-lis—blossoms, stalks, roots, and all—and stew them over a slow fire. With this water bathe your eyes several times a day, and you will certainly be cured of the malady. But first purge yourself, and then go on using the water." The Pope spoke some affectionate words to me,

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and I went off rather more content than I had been.

lix. It was true I had been ill ; but I think I had caught the malady from that pretty young servant girl whom I had in my house at the time I was robbed. The French evil was latent in me for four whole months ; then all at once it covered my body. It did not show itself in the usual form, for I was covered with red boils of the size of farthings. The doctors were never willing to call it by the name of the French evil ; and yet I told them why I thought it was so. I continued to treat myself in their fashion, and got no better. Then at last I made up my mind to take lignum vitæ, against the wishes of the first doctors in Rome. I took it with the greatest system and abstinence you can imagine, and in a few days I felt very much better, so that at the end of fifty days I was cured, and as sound as a fish in the sea. Then as a restorative after my great exhaustion, as soon as winter came on, I amused myself with shooting. This forced me through the wind and the water, and to stand about in the marshes, so that in a few days I was a hundred times worse than before. Once more I put myself into the hands of the doctors, and they went on treating me ; but I grew worse. When the fever attacked me again, I made up my mind to take the guaiac. The doctors would not hear of it, and told me that did I have recourse to it while I still had fever, I should be dead in a week. However, I made up my mind to disobey them, and I kept to the same system as before. When I had drunk the guaiac water for four days, the fever left me quite, and I began to feel wonderfully restored. While I was treating myself thus, I was all the time getting on with the models ; and during this period of abstinence I made the finest things and the rarest designs I ever did in my life. At the end of fifty days I was alto-

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gether cured, and with the utmost care set myself to fortify my health. After this long fast I was cleansed from my malady as if I had been born again. But though I took pleasure in the restoration of my health, I did not work the less, now at the Pope's chalice and now at the Mint ; each of these tasks had their due share of my energies.

lx. Now it fell out that Cardinal Salviati was made legate to Parma ; and he bore me a great ill-will, as I have told you already. Well, in Parma a certain Milanese, a goldsmith and false coiner called Tobbia, was arrested and sentenced to be hanged and burned. His case was referred to the legate, who was told he was a man of great talent. So the Cardinal stayed the execution of the sentence, and wrote to Pope Clement, telling him that he now had in his hands the cleverest man in the goldsmith's trade, and that he was condemned to be hanged and burned for coining false money. But the man was simple and good, he said ; for he had asked the advice of his confessor, who had, according to Tobbia, given him liberty to do it. And the Cardinal added, "If you have this great man in Rome, your Holiness will be taking down Benvenuto's pride ; and I am sure that Tobbia's work will please you much more." And so the Pope sent for him to Rome. When he had come, his Holiness called for the two of us, and ordered us to make a design for the setting of a unicorn's horn, the finest ever seen, which had cost seventeen thousand ducats of the Camera. The Pope intended it as a gift for King Francis, and wished to have it richly set in gold. As soon as we had made our designs, each of us brought his to the palace. Tobbia's was a kind of candelabra, with the fine horn taking the place of the candle, while at the base were four unicorns' heads, so wretched in design, that when I saw it I couldn't help sniggering. The Pope noticed this, and called out, "Show yours."

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Now mine was one unicorn's head of a size corresponding to the horn. I had made the finest thing of it imaginable, for I had modelled it half on a horse and half on a stag, and had added a very fine mane and other kinds of adornments. As soon as mine was seen, of course every one declared it was the best. But some Milanese people were present during the contest, and they said, "Your Holiness is going to send this fine gift to France. But surely you know that the French are gross persons, who will not recognise the excellence of Benvenuto's work. A thing like this now," they said, pointing to Tobbia's design, "will please them, and such things do not take so long to make. Then Benvenuto can give himself up to finishing your chalice, and thus two things will be done in the same time. Besides, this poor man whom you have sent for, will be employed too." The Pope, most anxious to have his chalice, seized on the advice of the Milan men, and next day ordered Tobbia to set the unicorn's horn, and sent word to me by his Master of the Wardrobe that I was to finish the chalice. To this message I replied that I desired nothing better, that if it were made of anything else than gold I could easily do so without his help; but as it was of gold, his Holiness must provide me with the material, if he wished to have it completed. At these words this low-born minion of the court cried, "Oh, do not ask the Pope for gold, or you will put him into such a rage as will be your undoing." "Will your honour inform me how to make bread without flour?" I asked. "Well then, without gold this work will never get done." And the Master of the Wardrobe, not unaware I was laughing at him, said he would report all I had said to the Pope. And so he did. The Pope got into a fierce passion, and said he just wished to see if I was mad enough not to finish it. And so two months passed. Though I had indeed

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said I would not do a stroke more, I was better than my word, for I went on working with the greatest eagerness. But seeing that I did not bring it to him, his Holiness began to bear me a real grudge, and to say he would make me suffer for my conduct in some way or another. He said so one day in the presence of one of his own jewellers, a Milanese called Pompeo, nearly related to a certain Messer Traiano, Pope Clement's favourite servant. These two put their heads together, and said to Clement, "If your Holiness were to take away his place at the Mint, perhaps you would breed in him a desire to finish the chalice." But the Pope answered, "Then I should incur two evils. I should be badly served at the Mint, which is a thing of great importance to me, and most certainly I should never have the chalice." Nevertheless, these two Milanese—seeing him badly disposed towards me—so swayed him in the end that he did indeed take away the Mint from me, giving it to a young Perugian known by the name of Fagiolo. Then came Pompeo to tell me how his Holiness had deprived me of my place; and that if I did not finish the chalice, he would take other things away too. To which I answered, "Tell his Holiness that, for the Mint, the loss is his, not mine; and so shall it be with the other things; and if he should desire me to accept it again, I shouldn't think of consenting." And the graceless, ill-conditioned fool thought he could not run back quickly enough to tell him all I had said—and what he had invented besides. Eight days after the Pope sent me another message by the same man, that he no longer desired me to finish the chalice, and that he wanted it back just as it was. I answered Pompeo, "This is not like the Mint, which he had the power to take from me. True, the five hundred crowns which I had, belong to his Holiness, and these I shall return at once. But this work is mine, and I shall do just

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what I like with it." Off ran Pompeo to tell the Pope these words, and some other stinging ones too, which, not without reason, I had shot at himself.

lxi. After two or three days, one Thursday there came to me two of his Holiness's favourite chamberlains. One of them is alive now, and a bishop. His name was Messer Pier Giovanni, and he was attached to the Pope's Wardrobe. The other was of still higher rank, but his name has gone clean out of my head. When they had come to me they said, "We are sent by the Pope, Benvenuto, to bid you, since mild measures are useless with you, either give us up the chalice, or go with us to prison." Then I looked cheerfully in their faces as I answered, "My lords, if I were to give it up to his Holiness, I should be giving what belongs to me and not to him; and for the moment I have no desire to do anything of the kind, for I have worked at this thing with my best energies, and I do not want it to get into the hands of some ignorant bungler, who would spoil it with a light heart." The goldsmith Tobbia was standing by as I said this, and he had even the face to ask me for the design of the work. I answered the rascal according to his deserts; but what I said need not be repeated here. Then when the gentlemen of the chamber urged me to make my preparations, I told them I was ready, and took up my cloak. But before I went out of my shop, I turned most reverently, my cap in my hand, to an image of Christ, and said, "O our gracious, immortal, just, and holy Lord! all that Thou doest is according to Thy justice, which is without equal. Thou knowest that I have come to the age of thirty, and never till now have I been threatened with prison. Now that Thou willest I should go to prison, I thank Thee with all my heart." Then turning to the two chamberlains I said, with one of my menacing looks, "No meaner guards than you would befit a man like

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me. So put me between you, and as your prisoner take me where you will." The two gentlemen burst out laughing, placed themselves one on each side of me, and, with pleasant discourse by the way, conducted me to the governor of Rome, who was called Magalotto. When we had reached him, we found the procurator-fiscal with him, and they were both waiting me. Then the two lords of the chamber, still laughing, said to the governor, "We consign to you this prisoner; have good care of him. It is a great satisfaction to us that we have done your police officers' business, for Benvenuto has been telling us that, as this is his first arrest, guards of our rank are no more than his due." Then they left us and went to the Pope. When they had told him everything exactly, it looked at first as if he were to burst out in a fury. But then he forced a laugh, for in the presence were certain lords and cardinals, friends of mine, in whose favour I stood high.

Meanwhile the governor and the fiscal were now bullying me, now exhorting me, now giving me advice. It was only reasonable, said they, that one who ordered a piece of work could take it back when he liked, and as he liked. To which I said that justice allowed nothing of the sort—no, not even to a Pope. For surely a Pope was not like those tyrannic little lords who do every wrong possible to their people, observing neither law nor justice. 'Twas not for a Vicar of Christ to act like that. Whereupon the governor, putting on his Jack-in-office air, said, "Benvenuto, Benvenuto, you are doing your best to make me give you your deserts. You should treat me with respect and courtesy, if you would behave towards me according to my merits." Then again he said, "Send for the work at once, and don't wait a second telling." To this I replied, "My lords, of your grace I would say just a word or two concerning my case." The fiscal,

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who was far discreeter in the exercise of his office than the governor, turned to the latter and said, "Monsignor, give him leave to speak a hundred words if he pleases. If so be he gives up the chalice, that's all we want." Then I took up the word, "Supposing any man whatsoever had ordered the building of a palace or a house, he might with justice say to the man who was building it, 'I do not wish you to work any more on my house or my palace.' When he had paid him for his labours, he could send him away. Again, supposing some lord who owned a jewel worth a thousand crowns, wished to have it set. If the jeweller did not serve him as he wished, he might say, 'Give me back my jewel, for I do not want your work.' But this case of mine does not come under either of these heads. It is not a matter of a house or a jewel. You can say nothing to me save that I should return the five hundred crowns which I have had. Therefore, my lords, do whatever you can, for you shall have nothing of me except the five hundred crowns. And tell this to the Pope, 'Your threats do not frighten me in the least. I am an honest man, and have no sins to be ashamed of.'" Thereupon the governor and the fiscal rose, telling me that they were going to the Pope and should return with orders, and then I might look out for myself! So I remained guarded, and walked in the meanwhile up and down a large hall. It was nearly three hours before they came back from the Pope. During this time all the best of our Florentine merchants came and entreated me not to quarrel with his Holiness, for it might be the ruin of me. But I replied that I was quite clear in my mind as to what I wanted to do.

lxii. As soon as the governor and the fiscal had returned from the palace, they sent for me, and the former spoke to me in this wise, "Benvenuto, of a truth, it grieves me to come from his Holiness with

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the orders I have—to wit, that you find the chalice instantly—or look to your own safety.” Then I answered I had never believed till that hour a holy Vicar of Christ could do such injustice; and even now must see it before I could believe it. “So, therefore, do what is in your power,” I added. Once more the governor replied, “I have still two words to say to you from the Pope, and then I shall execute the orders given me. He says you are to bring the chalice here to me, and I am to see it put in a box and sealed. Then I am to take it to the Pope, who promises upon his honour not to break the seal. He will return it to you at once. But he insists on this being done, that his honour also may be satisfied.” I answered, laughing, that I would give up my work right willingly in the way he suggested, for I had a mind to find out what a Pope’s word was made of. And so, having sent for the thing and sealed it in the way agreed on, I gave it to him. Then the governor went back to the Pope with the sealed chalice, and—according to what he told me—his Holiness took the case, turned it over several times, and then asked the governor if he had seen it. He answered yes, and that it had been sealed in this way in his presence, adding that it had seemed to him a wonderful work. Whereupon the Pope said, “Tell Benvenuto that Popes have authority to loose and to bind much greater things than this;” and while he said these words he opened the box with something like anger, taking off the cord and the seal with which it was fastened. He gazed at it for a long time, and, as I believe, showed it to Tobbia, the goldsmith, who praised it loudly. When the Pope asked him if he could make something like it, he answered yes. His Holiness told him he was to follow the design exactly, and, turning to the governor, he said, “Find out if Benvenuto will give it up to us. If he will, I’ll pay

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him what connoisseurs say it is worth. Or, if he really wishes to finish it, let him fix a date ; and if you see he is actually in earnest, let him have whatever he needs for the work—in reason." Then said the governor, "Most Holy Father, I know the violent nature of the young man. Authorise me to give him a sound rating in my own fashion." To this the Pope replied that he might do what he liked, so far as words were concerned, though he was sure he would make the thing worse ; also if he saw he could do nothing more, he was to tell me to take the five hundred crowns to Pompeo, his jeweller.

The governor came back, called me into his room, and looking at me as if I had been in the dock, said, "Popes have authority to loose and to bind anything in the world, and Heaven at once proclaims the deed well done. Here is your chalice, opened and examined by his Holiness." At that I lifted up my voice and cried, "I thank God that now I can tell what a Pope's word is made of." Then the governor's words and manner to me became intolerably insolent ; but seeing that he gained nothing by this, and altogether hopeless of the business, he took on a milder tone and said, "Benvenuto, I am much grieved that you refuse to see where your advantage lies. But go, take the five hundred crowns whenever you like to Pompeo." With my chalice in my hand, away I went, and without delay delivered up the money. Now the Pope probably thought that I should not have ready money enough, or that for other reasons I might not deliver the whole sum so promptly, and he was desirous of binding me once more to his service. Therefore when he saw Pompeo coming to him smiling, with the money in his hand, he flung insults at him, and was much annoyed that the thing had turned out like this. So he said, "Go and find Benvenuto in his shop, and be as civil to him as an ignorant brute like you can be, and tell

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him that if he will only finish the work, for a reliquary to carry the body of the Lord in when I go in procession, I will supply him with all that he needs—provided he works." So Pompeo came to me, called me out of the shop, paid me the most fatuous compliments, like the donkey he was, and gave me the Pope's message. I replied at once that the greatest treasure I could wish for in all the world was to have regained the favour of so great a Pope, which had strayed from me, yet not by my fault, but through my terrible infirmity and the wickedness of envious men who delight in making mischief. "But since his Holiness has an abundance of servants," I went on, "don't let him send you here again, if you value your safety. So off you go, and mind your own business. I shall never fail, night or day, by thought or deed, in the service of the Pope; but keep this well in your mind—when you have delivered my message, never meddle again in any affairs of mine, or I'll let you discover your mistake through the chastisement it deserves." The man went and reported everything to the Pope, using, however, much more brutal words than I had spoken. So stayed the thing for a while, and I looked after my shop and my business.

lxiii. Tobbia, the goldsmith, was finishing the ornamentation of the unicorn's horn. And, besides, the Pope had told him to set to work on the chalice, using that design of mine which he had seen. But when he asked Tobbia to show him what he had done, he was so ill satisfied with it that he regretted sorely having broken with me, found fault with his other work as well, and was inclined to fall out with the men who had brought him to his notice. Several times there came to see me Baccino della Croce, on the part of the Pope, to urge me to make the reliquary. In reply I begged his Holiness to let me rest after the terrible illness I had had, from which

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I had not altogether recovered. But, I continued, I should prove to his Holiness that every hour when I was fit to work should be spent in his service. I had set myself to do his portrait, and was making a medal for him secretly, the steel dies for which I was fashioning at home. This I could the better do as I had a partner in my shop who had once been my apprentice, Felice by name.

Now about this time I had fallen in love—as a young man will—with a young Sicilian girl who was very beautiful. And as she too gave signs of being very fond of me, her mother, becoming aware of it, grew anxious as to what might happen. And, in fact, I had made up my mind to run away to Florence for a year with this girl, without letting her mother know. But hearing of this, the woman left Rome secretly by night, and went in the direction of Naples. She said she was going to Civitâ Vecchia, but she really went to Ostia. I followed on their traces as far as Civitâ Vecchia, and committed a thousand follies in trying to find her. It would be too long to tell them all exactly ; enough to say that I was on the verge of going mad or dying. At the end of two months she wrote to me that she was in Sicily, and very ill pleased to be there. By that time I had been giving myself up to all the pleasures imaginable, and I had taken another love, but only to extinguish this earlier flame.

lxiv. Through certain odd circumstances it came about that I gained the friendship of a Sicilian priest, a man of most lofty mind, and with an excellent knowledge of Latin and Greek. While we were conversing one day together, we chanced to talk of the art of necromancy, concerning which I said, "All my life long I have had the greatest desire to see and hear something of it." Whereupon the priest answered, "Strong and steady must be the mind of him who sets himself to such an enterprise." I replied that

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strength and steadiness of mind I should have and to spare, if only I had the means of testing these. Then answered the priest, "If you have but the courage for it, I'll give you your fill of the rest." So we agreed to put the thing in hand. One evening the priest began to make his preparations, and told me I was to find a companion or two, but not more. I called on my great friend Vincenzio Romoli, and he brought with him a Pistoja man, who was also given to necromancy. Together we set off for the Coliseum, and there, having dressed himself after the wont of magicians, the priest began to draw circles on the ground, with the finest rites and ceremonies you can imagine. Now he had bidden us bring precious perfumes and fire, and evil smelling stuff as well. When all was ready, he made an entrance to the circle, and, taking us by the hand, led us one by one within. Then he distributed the duties. The pentacle he gave into the hands of his companion magician ; we others were given the care of the fire for the perfumes ; and he began his conjuring. This had lasted more than an hour and a half, when there appeared many legions of spirits, so that the Coliseum was full of them. I was attending to the precious incense, and when the priest perceived the great multitudes, he turned to me and said, "Benvenuto, ask of them something." I answered, "Let them transport me to my Sicilian Angelica." That night he got no reply at all, but my eager interest in the thing was satisfaction enough for me. The necromancer told us we must come back another time, when I should have the fulfilment of my desire. But he wished me to bring with me a young boy of perfect purity.

So I brought a shop-boy of mine about twelve years old. Once more I sent for Vincenzio Romoli ; and as a certain Agnolino Gaddi was a close friend of both of us, we took him too on the business. When we had again reached the appointed place, the

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necromancer made the same preparation with even greater care, and led us into the circle, which he had made this time with still more wonderful skill and ceremonies. Then he gave to my friend Vincenzio the care of the perfumes and the fire, with Agnolino Gaddi to help him, put the pentacle into my hand, telling me to turn it in the directions he would indicate, while under the pentacle stood my little shop-boy. This done, the necromancer began to utter the most terrible invocations, and to call by their names many of the princes of the demoniac legions (speaking the while in Hebrew words, also in Greek and Latin), and commanding them, by the strength and power of God increase, living, and eternal ; so that in a brief space the whole Coliseum was full of them, and there were a hundred times more than there had been the first night. Meanwhile Vincenzio Romoli, along with Agnolino, was attending to the fire and to the burning of the precious perfumes. Once more I asked, by advice of the magician, to be with my Angelica. Then he turned to me and said, "Do you hear what they say ?—that in a month's time you will be where she is." And again he entreated me to stand firm, for the legions were a thousand more than he had called ; and since they had agreed to what I had asked, we must speak soft to them, and gently bid them go. On the other side, the boy, who was under the pentacle, said, all trembling, that round us were a million of the most warlike men, and that they were threatening us. Moreover, said he, four huge giants had appeared. They were armed, and they made as if they would enter our circle. At this the necromancer, who was shaking with fright, tried with all the soft and gentle words he could think of to bid them go. Vincenzio Romoli, looking after the perfumes, was quivering like a reed. But I, who was just as much afraid, forced on myself a braver mien,

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and inspirited them in wonderful fashion, though, indeed, I nearly died when I saw the magician's fright. The boy, who had put his head between his knees, said, "I'll die in this way, since die we must." Then I said to the child, "These creatures are all lower than us, and what you see is only smoke and shade; so lift your eyes." When he had done so he spoke once more, "The whole Coliseum is on fire, and the fire is upon us;" and, putting his hand to his face, again he said he was dead, and he would not look any more. The necromancer entreated me to stand by him, also to make fumes of assafoetida. So, turning to Vincenzio Romoli, I told him to do this, and looked at Agnolino Gaddi the while, whose eyes were starting from his head with terror, and who was more than half dead. "Agnolo," I said to him, "this is no time to shiver and shake. Up and make yourself useful! Throw the assafoetida quickly on the fire." At the instant when he moved to do this, he yielded so powerfully to the needs of nature that it served better than the assafoetida. The boy lifted his head at this great stench and noise, and, hearing me laugh, his fear was calmed a little, and he told us the spirits were riding off tumultuously. So we remained till the chimes of day began to sound. Then again the boy spoke, saying that but few remained, and they were far off. The magician, having gone through the rest of his ceremonies, doffed his robes, gathered up a great load of books he had brought; and we all came out of the circle together, sticking as close as possible to one another—especially the boy, who squeezed himself into the middle of us, and clutched the magician by the vest and me by the cloak. On our way towards our houses in the Banks, he told us that two of the demons he had seen in the Coliseum were going before us, now leaping, now running over the roofs, now along the ground. The wizard told

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us that in all the times he had entered the circles nothing so great had ever happened to him. And he tried to persuade me to help him in making incantations over a book. Out of this we should draw infinite riches ; for we should ask the demons to teach us where to find the treasures, of which the earth was full, and thus should become very rich. As for love and such-like things, he said they were vanity and folly, which profited nothing at all. I answered that if I were learned in Latin I would do so right willingly. But he persuaded me that Latin letters would in no wise serve me ; that, had he wished, he could have got many a one learned in Latin ; but that he had never found any man of so steadfast a mind, and that I should give heed to his counsel. Talking thus, we reached our homes, and all that night each of us dreamt of devils.

lxv. We used to see each other every other day, and the necromancer was most insistent I should take part in the enterprise. So I asked him how long it would take, and where we should have to go. He replied that less than a month would see the end of it, and that the most fitting place was in the mountains of Norcia, although one of his masters had made his incantations near here, at a place called the Badia di Farfa. But he himself had experienced some difficulties there, which would not be met with in the mountains of Norcia. The Norcian country-folk, too, were trustworthy, he said, and had some practice in the art ; in a strait could even be of great service. This wizard-priest, of a truth, was so persuasive that I was quite willing to join him in the thing ; but first, I said, I wished to finish the medals I was making for the Pope. I had told him, and no one else, about these, begging him to keep the secret. Yet I kept on asking him if he thought that at the stated time I should find myself with my Sicilian Angelica ; for now the day was drawing very near,

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it seemed to me strange I heard nothing of her. The wizard replied that most certainly I should find her, for the spirits never failed in their word when they promised in the fashion they had done. But I was to watch open-eyed, and to be on the alert against a misfortune which might come upon me in this regard ; also I must steel myself to endure something that would go against the grain, for he saw in it a very great danger. Likewise, he said, it would be well for me to go away with him and make the incantations over the book ; for thus my great peril would pass, and I could gain fortune both for myself and for him. I was beginning to care a great deal more about it than he did himself. Nevertheless, I told him that there had come to Rome a certain Maestro Giovanni of Castel Bolognese, a most skilful man in making medals of my kind in steel, and that I desired nothing better in the world than to compete with him, and shine out to the world in such an undertaking. So by my great talents, and not by the sword, did I hope to put my enemies to rout. Yet the necromancer still said, "I entreat you, Benvenuto mine, come with me, and flee a great danger I see threatening you." But I was resolved, in spite of everything, to finish my medal. Now already the end of the month was nearly on us ; yet so in love was I with my medal that I never gave a thought to Angelica or anything of the sort. My work was everything to me.

lxvi. One day, about the hour of vespers, I had occasion to go at an unusual hour to my shop in the Banks. I was living in a little house behind the Banks, and seldom went to my shop, leaving all my business to be done by my partner Felice. When I had been there a little time, I remembered I had to go and speak to Alessandro del Bene. So I set out, and in the Banks I met a great friend of mine called Ser Benedetto. He was a notary, and a native of

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Florence, the son of a blind Sienese beggar who used to say prayers in the streets for alms. Now this Ser Benedetto had lived at Naples for many many years, and afterwards had come to Rome, where he did business for certain Sienese merchants of the Chigi family. My partner had time after time asked him for money due for some rings which had been entrusted to him. That very day Felice had met him in the Banks, and asked for payment in a rough fashion, as was his wont, while Ser Benedetto was in the company of some of his patrons. They, taking notice of the thing, cried out on Ser Benedetto, saying they would employ some one else who had no barking dogs at his heels. As he went off with them he defended himself as best he could, swearing he had paid the goldsmith, and that he could not help a madman's fury. When the Sienese merchants took these words in bad part, and dismissed him summarily, he came like a shot to my shop, perhaps to have his spite out on Felice. But as it happened, right in the middle of the Banks we ran against each other, and I, who knew nothing of all this, greeted him with my usual politeness. Rude words were my only answer. Then I called to mind all that the necromancer had told me, and, reining myself in as well as I could, as I had been told I must do, I said, "Ser Benedetto, my brother, do not be wroth with me who have done you no harm, and who know nothing of what has happened to you. If you have anything against Felice, for any sake go and have it out with him ; he must know best what to say to you. But as I am quite in the dark, you do wrong to snarl at me in this fashion, especially as you know that I am not a man to put up with insults." To which he answered that I did know all about it ; that he was a man who could make me bear the weight of it and more ; and that Felice and I were two great scoundrels. Already a great many people

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had gathered round to watch the quarrel. Stung by his ugly words, I bent down suddenly and picked up a handful of mud—for it had been raining—and, quick as lightning, aimed it at his face. But he ducked, so that he got it in the middle of his head. Now in this mud was a bit of hard rock with sharp corners, and one of these striking him, he fell senseless to the ground, and all the bystanders, seeing the great flow of blood, made up their minds he was indeed dead.

lxvii. While he was lying there, and the people were preparing to carry him away, there passed by Pompeo, the jeweller, of whom you have heard before. The Pope had sent for him about some jewel business. Seeing the man in a bad way, he asked who had struck the blow, and he was answered, "Benvenuto. But the fool has only himself to blame." Well, no sooner was Pompeo in the presence of the Pope than he cried out, "Most Holy Father, Benvenuto has this moment murdered Tobbia. I saw it with my own eyes" Whereupon the Pope in a fury ordered the governor, who was present, to seize me and hang me at once in the place where I had committed the crime, commanding him to leave no stone unturned in his search for me, and never to show his face again until I was hanged.

Now when I saw that unlucky man lying there, my mind ran to my own affairs. I thought of the power of my enemies, and all that might follow from this occurrence. So taking myself off, I withdrew to the house of Messer Giovanni Gaddi, clerk of the Camera, meaning to make speedy preparations for escape. But Messer Giovanni advised me not to be in such a hurry to go off, for it might be the evil was not so great as I thought ; and he called Messer Annibal Caro, who lived with him, and bade him go and get information on the affair. Meanwhile there appeared a Roman nobleman of the household of the

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Cardinal de' Medici, and sent by him. Calling Messer Giovanni and me apart, he told us that the Cardinal had repeated to him the words he had heard the Pope say, and that as he had no means of helping me, I must do all I could to escape his first fury, and not trust myself in any house in Rome. As soon as the nobleman had gone, Messer Giovanni, looking in my face, made as if he would weep. "Ah me!" he said, "Ah woe is me! for I can do nothing at all to help you." But I answered, "God willing, I shall help myself. The only thing I ask is that you lend me one of your horses." A black Turkish horse was already saddled, the handsomest and the best in Rome. So I mounted, with an arquebuse in front of my saddle-bow ready loaded, and thus I was prepared for any attack. At the Sistine bridge I found the whole guard of the Bargello, horse and foot; so making a virtue of necessity, I boldly spurred on my horse at a trot, and, thanks be to God, who dimmed their eyes, I passed over free; then with all speed possible I set off for Palombara, a place belonging to Lord Giovanbatista Savello. From here I sent back the horse, though I kept Messer Giovanni in the dark as to my whereabouts. Signor Giovanbatista housed me with great kindness for two days, and then advised me to depart and go towards Naples till the tempest should blow over; and, giving me a companion, he put me on the Naples road. On the way I met in with a sculptor friend of mine, who was going to San Germano to finish the tomb of Pier de' Medici at Monte Cassino. This man, who was called Solosmeo, brought me news, how, the very evening of my flight, Pope Clement had sent one of his chamberlains to ask after Tobbia; how they had found him at work, and that there was nothing the matter with him, nor did he even know anything of the affair. This being reported to the Pope, he turned to Pompeo and said, "You are a scoundrel,

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but I warn you that you have roused a serpent that will bite you, and it will be no more than you deserve." Then he ordered the Cardinal de' Medici to keep his eye on me, saying that for nothing in the world would he lose me. And then Solosmeo and I went on our road singing towards Monte Cassino, our plan being to go from there to Naples.

lxviii. As soon as Solosmeo had seen to his business at Monte Cassino we took the road again for Naples. We had come within half a mile of the city when an innkeeper met us and bade us come to his inn, telling us he had been in Florence many years with Carlo Ginori. If only we would put up at his place, he would do us every kindness, because we were Florentines. Several times we told him that we did not wish to go with him, but he now rode on before and now waited behind, repeating over and over again the same thing, that he wanted us to come home with him. This I found wearisome at last ; so I asked him if he knew the whereabouts of a certain Sicilian lady called Beatrice, who had a beautiful young daughter called Angelica. They were courtesans. The innkeeper, thinking I was jesting, said, " God confound courtesans and all who have dealings with them ! " And giving his horse a dig with his foot, he made as if to leave us for good. It seemed as if I had got fairly rid of the beast at last, though not without some loss to myself, for I called to mind the great love I bore to Angelica. While I was talking of her to Solosmeo, not without some amorous sighing, we saw mine host coming back in a furious hurry, and as soon as he came up to us he said, " Two or three days ago a lady and a young girl returned to a house near my inn. They bore those names, but I do not know if they are from Sicily or some other country." Then I answered, " Such power has the name of Angelica over me that

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I will certainly come home with you." So we went off with mine host to the city of Naples, and got down at his inn. Then it seemed to me a thousand years before I settled my things, which nevertheless I did with the utmost speed. In a house near the inn I found my Angelica, whose endearments to me were warmer than I can describe. It was then twenty-two of the clock, and I stayed with her till next morning, with an enjoyment the like of which I have never known. But while I was indulging in this pleasure, I remembered that exactly on that day the month was up, of which prophecy had been made by the demons in the wizard's circle. So let every man who deals with such beings ponder the incalculable perils through which I passed.

lxix. Now I showed to the goldsmiths in Naples a diamond which happened to be in my purse. And here I should say, that though I was a young man, such repute had I even in those parts, that the heartiest reception was given me. Among the others who showed me kindness was a very good fellow, Messer Domenico Fontana by name. This worthy man left his shop for three whole days while I was in Naples, nor would he be parted from me. He was my guide to many of the splendid antiquities in the city and outside. He took me, besides, to pay my respects to the Viceroy of Naples, who had manifested a strong desire to see me. Presenting myself, I received a most honourable welcome from his Excellency, who, by the way, did not fail to catch sight of the diamond. He bade me show it to him, and said that if I were thinking of parting with it, I mustn't forget him. When I had it back again in my own hands I offered it anew to his Excellency, saying that both the diamond and I were at his service. He replied that he valued the stone highly, but were I to stay with him he would rate that much higher, and would make such arrangements

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as should quite satisfy me. We exchanged many courteous words ; and, coming to the merits of the diamond, his Excellency asked me to state its price right out. Whereupon I said it was just two hundred crowns. He replied that this was reasonable, as it had been mounted by me, the first jewel-setter in the world ; but if the setting were done by any one else, it would not show the full brilliance of the stone. I told him, however, it had not been set by me ; that the work, indeed, was not well done, and its fine effect was due to its own excellence. If I were to set it again, I should improve it enormously. Then applying my thumb nail to the sharp edges of the facets, I drew the stone from the ring, and, rubbing it up a little, I gave it into the Viceroy's hands. Much pleased and astonished, he gave me a bill for the two hundred crowns I had asked.

Going back to my lodging, I found letters from the Cardinal de' Medici, wherein he bade me return to Rome with the utmost diligence, and get down at once at his most reverent lordship's house. When I read the letter to Angelica, she begged me most lovingly, and with tears, to stop in Naples, or else to take her with me. I answered that if she would come along with me, I would give into her keeping the two hundred ducats I had got from the Viceroy. Then her mother, seeing us converse secretly together, came up to us and said, " Benvenuto, if you are going to take my Angelica away to Rome, leave me fifteen ducats to pay for my lying-in, and after that I'll follow you." I told the wicked old woman that I'd give her thirty with a good will, if she would be pleased to give up her Angelica to me. And so the bargain was struck. Angelica begged me to buy her a gown of black velvet, which was very cheap in Naples. I did all they asked me willingly ; sent for the velvet, bargained for, and paid it ; but the old woman, who thought me fatuously

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in love, demanded a gown of fine cloth for herself, would have had me lay out a great deal on her sons, and begged for more money than I had offered her. At this I turned to her good-naturedly and said, "My dear Beatrice, didn't I offer you enough?" "No," said she. So I replied that what was not enough for her would suffice for me, and having kissed my Angelica, we parted, she with tears, I with a laugh, and in haste I took the road for Rome.

lxx. It was night when I left Naples, with my money concealed on my person, for one may expect to be attacked and murdered in that country. When I reached Selciata, I had to defend myself with the greatest skill and strength of body against some horsemen who were bent on having my life. A few days after, I left Solosmeo at his work on Monte Cassino, and one morning I stopped to dine at an inn in Anagni. When I was nearing the inn, I shot at some birds with my arquebuse, and knocked down several; but a splinter of iron from the lock of my gun tore my right hand. Though there was no great harm done, it seemed at first rather serious, because of the great amount of blood I lost. Entering the inn yard, I put my horse in the stable, and mounted to an upper floor, where I found a company of Neapolitan gentlemen, who were just sitting down to table. With them was a young gentlewoman, the loveliest creature I have ever seen. Now there followed me up the stairs my sturdy young serving-man with a huge halbert in his hand; so that between this weapon and the blood on my person we struck such terror into the poor gentlemen—all the more as the place was a nest of cut-throats—that they got up from the table, trembling the while, and prayed God to come to their aid. On which I answered, laughing, that God had indeed sent them aid, since I was the very man to defend them from whoever should molest them. Then I begged for some help in

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bandaging my hand, and the lovely lady took out a handkerchief richly worked in gold, and was about to tie up my wound with it. This I would not have ; but she tore it in half then and there, and with the utmost gentleness bound up my wound with her own hand. Then were the rest somewhat reassured, and we dined very merrily together. After dinner we mounted our horses and went off in company. But as their fear had not yet all vanished, the gentlemen shrewdly engaged me in conversation with the lady, while they remained somewhat behind. So I rode by her side on my pretty little horse, signing to my servant to keep at a distance. Thus we could talk together in confidence, and it was not about everyday matters, you may be sure. It was thus I made my way to Rome, and it was the pleasantest journey of all my remembrance.

Reaching Rome, I dismounted at the palace of the Cardinal de' Medici. As his most reverend Excellency was at home, I got word with him, and thanked him exceedingly for calling me back. Then I begged his lordship to ensure my not being put in prison, and, if it were possible, against a fine. The Cardinal received me very gladly, and told me I was to fear nothing. Then turning to one of his gentlemen, a Sienese called Pierantonio Pecci, he bade him tell the Bargello from him to keep his hands off me, and asked him how it went with the man whose head I had wounded with a stone. Messer Pierantonio replied that he was very ill, and that he would be worse, for if he knew I had come back to Rome, he would do his best to die just to spite me. At this the Cardinal laughed heartily, and said, "He couldn't do better, if he wished to prove his Sienese birth." Then turning to me, he continued, "For our honour and your own, wait four or five days before appearing in the Banks. After that go where you like, and let fools die if they want to." So off I went to my

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house, and set myself to finish the medal I had already begun, with Pope Clement's head on one side, and a figure of peace on the reverse. Peace was represented by a slender female figure, clothed in thinnest raiment, and girdled, with a torch in her hand, which was kindling a heap of weapons bound together like a trophy. You could see likewise part of a temple, in which was Fury bound by many chains. Round about was the device *Clauduntur belli portae*. While I was finishing this medal, the man I had struck recovered, and the Pope never stopped asking for me. But meanwhile I refused to go and see the Cardinal de' Medici ; for every time I went, his lordship gave me something important to do for him, so that my work on the medal was hindered. But Messer Pier Carnesecchi, a great favourite of his Holiness, undertook to keep his eye on me, and from time to time insinuated how much the Pope desired me to work for him again. I replied that in a few days I would prove to his Holiness that I had never left his service.

lxxi. A few days after, having finished my medal, I stamped it in gold, in silver, and in brass. When I had let Messer Pietro see it, he brought me at once to the Pope. It was after dinner time on a lovely April day, and his Holiness was in the Belvedere. When I came into his presence, I gave the medals with the steel dies into his hands. He took them, and saw at a glance the magnificent art they displayed ; then looking Messer Piero in the face, he said, "The ancients were never so well served with medals." While he and the others were examining, now the dies, now the medals, I began to speak modestly as follows : "If a Higher Power had not ruled over my unlucky stars, preventing that violence with which they threatened me, your Holiness had lost, without fault on his side or mine, a faithful and loving servant. And so I hold, most holy Father,

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that one cannot go wrong in cases where all is staked upon a single throw, if, after the saying of poor simple men, we count seven before we cut one. The slanderous lying tongue of my worst enemy so easily stirred your Holiness's wrath, that, in a great fury, you ordered the governor to hang me there and then. Yet later, when you had seen the great injustice of such a punishment—which would have done you a great wrong by depriving you of such a servant as your Holiness owns me to be—I verily believe that, in face of God and the world, you would have felt no little remorse. Thus good and virtuous fathers, and masters too, should not let fall their arm so rashly on their sons and servants; for afterwards remorse will be of no use at all. Now since God has hindered the malign course of the stars, and saved me for your Holiness, I entreat that next time your wrath be not so quickly roused against me."

The Pope had stopped looking at the medals, and was listening to me with great attention; and as in the presence were many lords of high degree, he reddened somewhat, and looked as if he were ashamed; but not knowing how to get out of the coil any other way, he said he did not recollect ever having given such an order. Perceiving his embarrassment, I spoke of other things till he had regained his usual confidence. Then his Holiness began to discuss the medals, and asked me how I had managed to stamp them so admirably, considering their size, for he had never seen antique medals so large. About this we talked for a bit, and then, afraid I might read him another lecture worse than the last, he told me the medals were most beautiful, that he was much pleased with them, but that he should like to have another reverse according to his own fancy, if it were possible for a medal to have alternative reverses. I said yes. Then his Holiness ordered from me the story of Moses when he struck the rock and the water came

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out, along with these words, *Ut bibat populus.* And he added, "Go now, Benvenuto, and before you have finished it, I shall have made provision for you." As soon as I was gone, the Pope declared before them all that he would endow me, so that I could live in riches without ever working for any one else. And I went home and gave all my mind to the execution of the reverse with the Moses design.

lxxii. But now the Pope took ill, and the doctors judged him to be in danger. Then my enemy, who was afraid of me, bribed some Neapolitan soldiers to do to me what he feared I might do to him. So I found it no easy matter to defend my poor life. Yet I persevered, and completed the reverse. When I took it to the Pope, I found him in bed in a very serious condition. Nevertheless he received me most affectionately, and wished to see the medal and the dies. He had his spectacles and candles brought him, but could see nothing at all. Then he began to feel them all over with his fingers, and having done this for some little time, he heaved a great sigh, and said to those who were standing near that he had me much on his mind ; but if God gave him back his health, he would put everything to rights. Three days after the Pope died, and I found that all my pains had been for nothing. Yet I was of good courage, telling myself that through these medals I had become so well known that I should be employed by any Pope, and perhaps with greater profit than heretofore. So did I put heart into myself, and thrust behind me altogether the gross insults which Pompeo had cast on me. Then, in my armour and with my sword at my side, I set off to St. Peter's, and kissed the dead Pope's feet, not without tears.

Afterwards I came back to the Banks, to watch the great confusion which reigns at such a time. While I was sitting there with many friends around me, up came Pompeo with ten men about him, all

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fully armed. When he was just opposite, he stopped as if to pick a quarrel with me. The brave and adventurous young spirits who were with me, signed to me to draw on him. But then quick came the thought, that if I drew, there might follow some dreadful consequence to those who had nothing to do with the thing at all. So I judged it better that I alone should put my life to the hazard. You could barely have said two Ave Marias before Pompeo, with a sneering laugh in my direction, made off again. His men, too, laughed, and there were many tossings of heads and other insulting gestures. My comrades would have begun the fight there and then, but I told them hotly that I was man enough to fight my own battles, that I needed no greater champion than myself, and that they were to mind their own business. This angered my friends, and, grumbling, they left me. Among them was my dearest comrade, Albertaccio del Bene, own brother to Alessandro and Albizzo, and to-day a very rich man in Lyons. This Albertaccio was the most splendid young fellow I have ever known, and the most courageous ; he loved me as himself. Now he knew well that my patience was not for poor-spiritedness, but that it meant the most reckless bravery—for he had a perfect understanding of me—and taking up my words, he begged me to do him the favour of calling on him in any business I had a mind for. To which I answered, “Albertaccio mine, dear above all the others, be sure a time will come when you can help me ; but in this affair, if you love me, give no heed to me ; go about your own business, and be off speedily like the rest, for there is no time to be lost.” In my haste I could say no more.

Ixxiii. Meanwhile my enemies of the Banks had gone off slowly towards the place called the Chiavica, and had reached a point where cross roads meet.

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But the street where my enemy Pompeo's house stood was that which goes straight to the Campo di Fiore. Now being in need of something, he had gone into the apothecary's at the corner of the Chiavica, and had stopped there awhile on his business. It had come to my ears that he had been bragging of his having braved me—for so he thought he had done ; but in any case, it was the worse for him. For just when I had reached the corner, he came out of the apothecary's ; his bravos made place for him, and closed about him. But with a little keen-edged dagger I forced their ranks, and had my hands upon his breast so quickly, and with such coolness, that not one of them could hinder me. I was aiming at his face, but in his terror he turned his head, so that I plunged the poniard in just below the ear. It only needed two strokes, for at the second he fell dead, which had not been at all my intention. But, as the saying is, there's no bargaining about blows. With my left hand I drew out the dagger, and in the right I took my sword for the defence of my life. But all his bravos ran to the dead body, and made no show of attacking me. So I withdrew by myself through the Strada Giulia, thinking where I could best hide. I had gone about three hundred paces when I was joined by Pileto the goldsmith, a very good friend of mine. "Brother," said he, "now that the ill is done, let's think of your safety." To which I answered, "Let's go to Albertaccio del Bene's house, for only a little ago I told him the time would soon come when I should have need of him." So we reached Albertaccio's house, and we embraced with boundless affection ; and very soon there appeared the best of the young men about the Banks, of every nation save the Milanese ; and each one of them offered his life to save mine. Messer Luigi Rucellai, too, sent with exquisite courtesy to say that what he had was at my service, as did many other substantial

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men of his condition ; and there was not one of them but called down blessings on my hands ; for they held my enemy had insulted me deeply, and it was a wonder I could have borne with him so long.

lxxiv. Meanwhile Cardinal Cornaro heard of the affair, and of his own accord sent thirty soldiers, with as many halberds, pikes, and arquebuses, to bring me with all due honour to his place. I accepted the offer and went off with them, while a still larger number of the young fellows swelled my guard. But by this time Messer Traiano, the dead man's relative, and chief chamberlain to the Pope, sent to the Cardinal de' Medici a great Milanese nobleman, who informed him of the grave crime I had committed, and protested his lordship was bound to punish me. The Cardinal retorted, "Great wrong would he, indeed, have done, leaving this lesser wrong undone ! Thank Messer Traiano from me for his having told me what I did not know." Then suddenly turning, in the presence of the nobleman, to the Bishop of Forli, a gentleman of his court and his familiar friend, he said, "Search diligently for my Benvenuto, and bring him to me, for I have a good will to help and defend him. And who harms him, harms me." Thereupon the nobleman flushed angrily and took his leave ; and the Bishop of Forli came to seek me at Cardinal Cornaro's. Having found my host, he told him how the Cardinal de' Medici had sent for Benvenuto, and wished to be his protector. Now Cornaro, who was as irritable as a bear, answered the bishop hotly, telling him that he was just as well able to protect me as the Cardinal de' Medici. Whereupon the bishop asked as a favour to speak to me a word, outside this affair, on the Cardinal's business ; but Cornaro told him that for that day he might pretend he had talked with me. The Cardinal de' Medici was highly indignant ; but next night, with a good escort, I paid him a visit, unknown to

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my host. Then I begged him of his kindness to let me stay in Cornaro's house, telling him how kindly he had treated me. If only his most reverend lordship would permit this, I should have one more friend in my hour of need. For the rest, his lordship might dispose of me as he pleased. He replied that I was to do as I liked ; and I returned to Cornaro's house. A few days later Cardinal Farnese was made Pope.

When he had put his greater affairs in order, the new Pope called for me, and let me know he wished no one but me to make his money. Whereupon one of his most intimate friends, Latino Juvinal by name, spoke to his Holiness, and said I was in hiding for a homicide committed on the person of one Pompeo, a Milanese ; and then he added all that could be said in my favour. To which the Pope replied, "I did not know of Pompeo's death ; but well I know of Benvenuto's excuse. So make out a safe-conduct for him, that he may rest perfectly secure." Now there stood by a great friend of Pompeo, a man very intimate with the Pope, Messer Ambrogio of Milan, and he spoke thus, "In the first days of your reign it is not wise to grant favours of this sort." But his Holiness replied, "I know better about such things than you. Learn that men like Benvenuto, unique in their profession, are not subject to the laws. And especially is this the case with him, for I know how greatly he has been provoked." So my safe-conduct was made out, and without delay I began to work in the Pope's service, with the utmost favour from him.

lxxv. One day Messer Latino Juvinal came to see me, and gave me the commission to make the Pope's money. This stirred up the wrath of my enemies, who began to put all sorts of hindrances in my way. Whereupon his Holiness, aware of their evil intentions, rebuked them all, and determined



POPE PAUL III.

Titian. Naples, Museo Nazionale.

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that I should do the work. So I began to make the dies for the crowns. In the middle I put Saint Paul, with the legend, *Vas electionis*. This coin gave much more satisfaction than did those of my rivals, so that the Pope told them nobody was to mention money to him again ; for he had made up his mind I was to make his, and nobody else. So I set about the work with an easy mind ; and Messer Latino Juvinale used to procure me audiences of the Pope, for his Holiness had given him orders to that effect. I was most eager to be reappointed stamper to the Mint ; but on this point the Pope took counsel of others, and then told me that first of all I must receive pardon for the homicide. This I should have at the Holy Maries in August, by order of the aldermen of Rome. For it is the custom each year, on this solemn feast, to free twelve outlaws to these magistrates. In the meanwhile he would grant me another safe-conduct, so that I might rest secure till that time.

Then my enemies, seeing they could in no way prevent me having the Mint, bethought themselves of another expedient. The dead man Pompeo had left three thousand ducats as a dowry to a young bastard daughter of his. So they plotted that a favourite of Signor Pier Luigi, the Pope's son, should ask her in marriage, this lord himself to be the mediator. The thing was done. But the favourite was a wretched little peasant, brought up by Signor Pier Luigi ; and, according to rumour, he touched little of the money, his lord seizing it for his own use. Well, several times the husband of this girl, to please his wife, asked his patron to have me arrested ; and my lord had given a promise this should be done as soon as he saw my favour waning with the Pope. So things remained for about two months. The servant was trying all the time to get hold of the dowry, while his master would give him no straight answer, but kept assuring the wife he would certainly

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revenge her father. Though I knew something of what was going on, I presented myself several times before his lordship, who made a show of great benevolence to me. Yet all the time he was plotting either to have me murdered, or arrested by the Bargello. He had given the job into the hands of one of his men, a little devil of a Corsican soldier, ordering him to use all his wits in the business ; and some other enemies of mine, especially Messer Traiano, proposed to give a hundred crowns to the assassin, who said he would do the thing as easily as he would suck a new-laid egg. Aware of all this, I walked with wary eyes, and in good company, excellently protected with under-coat of mail and with armlets, for which I had got leave. The little Corsican, in his avarice, thought he would have all the money for himself, without peril, fancying he could carry the thing through with no one to help him. So one day after dinner he sent for me in Signor Pier Luigi's name. I went at once, for my lord had spoken of having some large silver vessels made. I left home in a hurry, but armed myself as usual, and walked quickly along the Strada Giulia, thinking to find no one about at that hour. Well, I was at the top of the street, and was making for the Farnese palace, when, turning the corner wide, as is my habit, I saw the little Corsican get up from where he was sitting, and post himself in the middle of the road. Thus I was in no way taken by surprise. Ready to defend myself, I slowed up a little, and walked closer to the wall to put a wider space between us. But he followed my example ; and when we were near each other, I could see plainly he was bent on doing me a mischief. And as I was alone, he thought he was going to succeed. Then I addressed him, saying, "Valorous soldier, if it were night, you might say you had mistaken me, but since it is day, you must know quite well who I am, and

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that I have never had anything to do with you, and never have done you any harm, but am quite capable of doing you a service." Thereupon, with a bullying gesture, and still standing in my path, he said he did not know what I was talking about. I replied, "I know very well what you want, and what you are saying; but this business you have in hand is more difficult and dangerous than you think; and perhaps it may turn out to your hurt. Remember you have to do with a man who would defend himself against a hundred; and the affair is not one for brave men like you to be concerned in." Meanwhile I, too, had been looking at him threateningly, and both of us changed colour. People had collected about us, for it was clear that our words meant bloodshed. So not daring to lay a hand on me, he cried, "We shall meet again." To which I answered, "I am always glad to see men of worth and those who prove themselves such."

Leaving him I repaired to my lord's house, to find he had never sent for me. When I was back in my shop, the Corsican sent me word by a great friend of his and mine, that I need not be on the watch for him any more, for he was fain to be my good brother; but that I should keep a sharp look-out for others; that I was in the greatest peril, men of high rank having vowed my death. I sent him my thanks, and looked after my safety as well as I could. Not many days after, I was told by a great friend of mine that Signor Pier Luigi had expressly ordered I should be seized that evening. Word of this reached me in the late afternoon. I spoke of the matter to some of my friends, who urged me to escape. The order had been given for one hour after sundown; and two hours before that I was off with the post bound for Florence. The fact was, that when the Corsican had proved he had not pluck enough to fulfil his promise, Signor Pier Luigi, of his own

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authority, had given orders for me to be arrested, only to appease that daughter of Pompeo somewhat, who insisted on knowing what had come of her dowry. When he found it impossible to satisfy her by revenging her father in either of the two ways he had planned, he bethought him of another, which shall be told in its own place.

lxxvi. Reaching Florence, I presented myself to the Duke Alessandro, who received me with the greatest affection, and insisted I should stay with him. Now in Florence there was a sculptor called Il Tribolino, a great crony of mine, for I was god-father to one of his sons. As we were talking together one day, he told me that Jacopo del Sannovino, who had been his master, had sent for him. Now as he had never been to Venice, and as he thought, besides, of the earnings to be looked for, he was most keen to go. Then he asked me if I had ever seen Venice, and I said no. Thereupon he begged me to accompany him, and I consented. So I told Duke Alessandro I should like to go to Venice first ; and after that I should come back to his service. He demanded a promise from me to this effect, and ordered me to come to see him before I left. So next day, after having made my preparations, I went to take leave of the Duke, whom I found in the Pazzi palace, which at the time was inhabited by the wife and daughters of Signor Lorenzo Cibo. I sent a message to his Excellency that I wished to set off to Venice, by his kind permission ; and an answer was brought back by Signor Cosimino de' Medici, to-day Duke of Florence, to the effect that I was to go and find Niccolò da Monte Aguto, who would give me fifty gold crowns ; and that his Excellency gave me this money for my enjoyment, because he loved me. Afterwards I was to come back and serve him.

I got the money from Niccolò ; went to fetch

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Tribolino at his house, and found him ready to start. He asked me if I had bound up my sword. I said a man riding forth on a journey should do no such thing ; but he told me that such was the custom in Florence ; and that there was a certain Ser Maurizio in power, who for the veriest trifle would have strung up St. John the Baptist himself. So you had to carry your sword bound till you were outside the gates. At this I laughed, and away we went. Soon we were joined by the Venice courier, who was nicknamed Lamentone ; and we travelled in his company past Bologna, and arrived one evening at Ferrara. There we put up at the inn on the Piazza, and Lamentone went off to seek out some exiles, to bring them letters and messages from their wives, and this with the consent of the Duke. But only the courier might speak to them—no one else, under pain of the same sentence. Meanwhile, it being a little less than two hours from sundown, Tribolo and I went to see the Duke of Ferrara return from Belfiore, where he had been to watch the jousting. On the road we met a number of exiles, who looked at us hard, as though they would force us to speak with them. Tribolo, who was the biggest coward I have ever known, never stopped saying, “Don’t look at them ; don’t speak to them, if you would ever go back to Florence.” So we stayed to see the Duke’s entry ; then returning to our inn, we found Lamentone. About an hour after dark Niccolò Benintendi came in with his brother Piero, and an old man, who, I think, was Jacopo Nardi. With these were some other young men. They stormed the courier with questions about their own folk in Florence. Tribolo and I stood apart, so as not to talk with them. When they had spoken awhile with Lamentone, Niccolò Benintendi said, “I know those two quite well. Why are they too proud to speak to us ? ” Then Tribolo bade me keep quiet, while

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Lamentone told them that the leave he had was not granted to us, which Benintendi said was ridiculous. "Plague take them!" cried he, with other pretty things of the kind. Thereupon I raised my head, and, with all the meekness I was capable of, addressed them thus, "Dear gentlemen, you can harm us a great deal, while we can in no way help you; and though you have said some things to us that had been better unsaid, yet we will not be wroth against you for that." Old Nardi declared I had spoken like the honest young fellow I was; but Niccolò Benintendi struck in with, "A fig for them and the Duke!" I answered that he was wronging us, for we had nothing to do with his affairs. Then old Nardi took up the cudgels for us, telling Benintendi he was unjust; but he went on insulting us all the same. So I warned him that I would say and do what would be most unpleasant to him, unless he minded his own business and left us in peace. But again he cried, "A fig for the Duke and you!" and told us we were a pack of asses. At these words I hurled back the lie in his face, and drew my sword. Then the old man, in his haste to be first at the stairs, tumbled down some steps, and the rest fell after him, one on the top of the other. I rushed forward, rattling my sword furiously along the wall, and shouting, "I will kill the last man of you!" But all the same I took the utmost care to do them no harm, though it would have been only too easy. Hearing the noise, the host called out; and Lamentone cried, "Keep back!" Some of them shouted, "Oh, my head!" others, "Let me out of this!" and so great was the confusion that they looked like a herd of swine. Then mine host brought a light. I retired upstairs, and sheathed my sword. Lamentone protested to Niccolò Benintendi he had done ill; and the host said to him, "It's a hanging matter to draw your sword here; and if the Duke knew of

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your insolence, he would string you up. I will let you off with less than you deserve ; but never show your face in this inn again, else you'll repent it." Then the host came upstairs to me. I would have excused myself ; but he did not let me say a word, telling me he knew I had had a thousand provocations, and advising me to be on the look-out for these men on my journey.

lxxvii. When we had supped, a boatman came to take us to Venice. I asked him if he would give us the boat to ourselves. He said yes, and the bargain was struck. In the morning betimes we rode to the port, which is some miles, I don't know how many, from Ferrara. As soon as we had got there, we found Niccolò Benintendi's brother, with three others, waiting my arrival. Among them they had two lances, and I had bought a good pike in Ferrara. Being otherwise well armed, I was not at all scared like Tribolo, who called out, "God save us ! They have come to murder us !" Then Lamentone turned to me and said, "The best thing you can do is to go back to Ferrara, for I see this is a serious business. Benvenuto, my friend, I beg you, get out of the way of the fury of those mad beasts !" But I rejoined, "Rather let us go forward, for God helps the right, and you shall see how I can help myself. Have we not secured this bark for ourselves ?" "Yes," said Lamentone. "Well, we shall hold it against them, for all my valour is worth." I spurred on my horse, and when I was about fifty paces off, strode boldly forward with my pike. Tribolo lingered behind, hunched up on his horse, as if he had been frozen ; and the courier Lamentone was puffing and blowing like the wind. It was a habit of his ; but now he did it more than ever, as he stood waiting what would be the end of this devilry. When I had reached the boat, the boatman came up to me and said that some Florentine gentlemen wished to share

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it, if I would permit. To which I answered, "The boat is engaged for us and for no one else ; and I am deeply grieved not to have the pleasure of their company." At these words a brave young fellow, one of the Magalotti, spoke up, " Benvenuto, we shall manage to procure you that pleasure." Whereupon I answered, " If God and the right which is on my side, as well as the force within me, manifest their full will and power, you shall manage nothing of the sort." And saying this, I jumped into the boat. Pointing my pike at them, I added, " With this I will show you that I am unable to avail myself of your company." Wishing to make a little show of fight, the Magalotti youth seized his weapon and came towards me. But I sprang upon the boat, and dealt him such a blow that, had he not fallen backwards, I should have run him through. His friends, instead of coming to his aid, drew back. I saw I could have slain him, but instead of doing so, I said, " Get up, brother, take your weapons, and be off. You have seen that what I will not that I cannot, and what I could that I would not." Then I called in Tribolo and the boatman and Lamentone ; and so we set off on our way to Venice. When we had gone ten miles along the Po, the young fellows, who had got into a little bark, came up with us, and when we were abreast of each other, that fool Pier Benintendi shouted, " Go on your way, Benvenuto, we shall meet again in Venice." " Make haste then," I said, " for I'll be there, and I'm ready to face any of you." So we arrived at Venice. There I took counsel with a brother of Cardinal Cornaro, and begged him to get me the permission to wear arms. He told me that I might certainly do so, for I ran no greater risk than of losing my sword.

lxxviii. So with my sword by my side, we went off to visit Jacopo del Sansovino, who had sent for Tribolo. He received us very kindly, and would

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have us dine with him, and so we stayed. But in his conversation with Tribolo, he said he had nothing for him to do just then, and bade him come back another time. At this I burst out laughing, and said jestingly to Sansovino, "Your home is rather too far away for him to come back again." And poor Tribolo, all woe-begone, cried, "I have your letter here, in which you wrote to me to come." But Sansovino answered that men of his standing—men of repute and talent—could do a thing like that, and more too. Whereupon Tribolo shrugged his shoulders, and muttered "Patience!" over and over again. Then, in spite of the good dinner which Sansovino had given me, I took the part of my friend Tribolo, who had right on his side. But at table Sansovino never stopped chattering about the great things he had done, speaking ill of Michel Agnolo and of all who practised his art, and praising himself to the skies the while. I got so irritated that each mouthful of food nearly choked me. But all I said was, "O Messer Jacopo, men of worth behave like men of worth, and men of talent, who create things of beauty and excellence, are more easily recognised in the praises of others than in their own complacent boasting." At these words we all rose from the table fuming. That same day, near the Rialto of Venice, I came across Piero Benintendi, who had some others with him. Well aware that they were seeking to do me a mischief, I retired into an apothecary's shop till their excitement should pass. Afterwards I heard that young Magalotti, to whom I had spoken civilly, had cried out upon them; and so the thing passed off.

lxxix. A few days after we made our way back to Florence. When we disembarked at a place beyond Chioggia, on the left hand going to Ferrara, our host would have us pay, according to his custom, before we went to sleep. I said in other places one paid in

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the morning, but he declared, "I wish to be paid the night before, and in my own way." Whereupon I replied that those who wanted things done in their own way should make a world for themselves ; and his customs were not ours ; but he bade me not weary him with talking, because he had made up his mind to have his own way. Tribolo, who was shaking with fright, nudged me to keep still, lest we should come off worse. So we paid the people in their way, and then went off to sleep. We had indeed excellent beds, everything in them new and scrupulously clean. Yet all the same I never closed an eye all night for thinking how I could have my revenge. Once I thought of setting fire to the house ; again of cutting the throats of the four fine horses he had in his stables. I saw how easy it would be for me to do either, but I did not quite see how my companion and I should escape. I finally made up my mind. First, I resolved to put my own baggage and my friend's in the boat ; and this I did. Then, when the horses were attached to the towing-rope, I said no one was to move till I came back, as I had left a pair of slippers in the room where I had slept. So I went back to the inn and asked for the host, who called out that he had nothing to do with us, and that we could go to the devil. Standing by was a miserable little bit of a stable boy, gaping with sleep, who said to me, "He wouldn't move for the Pope, for he has a slut with him whom he has been after for a long time." Then the boy asked me for some drink-money, and I gave him a few little Venetian coins, and told him to go and talk to the man with the towing-rope till I looked for my slippers and came back. So upstairs I went. I took a little razor-edged knife, and cut the four beds that were there all into shreds ; and I knew I had done damage to the tune of more than fifty crowns. Then I returned to the bark with bits of the bed-hangings in my pocket. Hastily

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I ordered the boatman to be off and away ; but when we had gone a little distance from the inn, my crony Tribolo said he had left some little straps which bound up his valise, and that he really must return for them. To this I replied he need not mind about two little straps, for I would make him as many big ones as he wanted. He said that I was always jesting, but that he absolutely must go back for them. He insisted the boatman should stop, and I that he should go on. Meanwhile I told him the bad turn I had done to the host, and showed him a sample of the bed-hangings and other things, at which such a fear came over him that he kept calling to the boatman, "On, on with you quickly !" And he did not feel out of danger till he was back at the gates of Florence. When we had reached there, Tribolo said, "Let us bind up our swords, for God's sake ! And no more pranks, for I have felt all the time I have been with you as if the knife were at my throat." On which I said, "Dear old Tribolo, you don't need to bind your sword up, for you have never drawn it." And this I said without looking, only because I had never once seen him play the man upon the journey. Whereupon, examining his sword, he cried out, "By God ! it is the truth you tell, for here it is tied up just as it was before I left home !" To my comrade I had seemed a bad companion for having resented insults, and defended us both against those who would have harmed us. But I thought his conduct much worse, since not once did he come to my aid in times of need. Let him be the judge who looks on dispassionately.

lxxx. As soon as I dismounted I made haste to seek Duke Alessandro. I thanked him heartily for his present of fifty crowns, and told his Excellency I was most ready to serve him in whatever I was good for. Thereupon he ordered me on the spot to make the dies for his money. The first coin I made was

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one of forty soldi, with the head of his Excellency on one side, and on the other a San Cosimo and a San Damiano. These were silver coins, and they gave so much satisfaction that the Duke maintained they were the finest pieces in all Christendom. So said all Florence, and everybody who saw them. I therefore asked his Excellency to settle a salary on me, and give me apartments in the Mint. Thereupon he told me to give my mind to serving him, and he would allow me much more than I asked. Meanwhile he said he had given orders to the Master of the Mint, who was a certain Carlo Acciaiuoli, that I was to go to him for all the money I wanted. And this I found to be the case. But I touched my money so thrifly that there was always a balance, according to my account.

Afterwards I made the dies for the giulio. On this coin was a San Giovanni in profile, seated, with a book in his hand ; and I thought I had never done anything so fine. On the other side were Duke Alessandro's arms. After that I made the dies for the half-giulios, on which I designed a head, full face, of San Giovannino. This was the first coin ever made with a full face on so thin a plate of silver. But the difficulty of the thing is not at all apparent except to the eyes of skilled masters in the art. Then I made stamps for the gold crowns. On one side was a cross, with some little cherubs, and on the other the arms of his Excellency. As soon as I had made those four sorts of money, I begged him to settle my salary, and also to grant me the apartments I had asked for, if he was pleased with what I had done. His Excellency, with much graciousness, said he was entirely satisfied, and that he would give due orders. We were in the Wardrobe during this conversation, my lord examining a wonderful little gun which he had just got from Germany. Seeing me look at the pretty tool

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with the utmost attention, he put it into my hand, saying he knew what delight such things gave me ; and as an earnest of what he had promised me, I might take any arquebuse from his armoury I liked, save this one, though, he added, there were many more beautiful and just as good in the place. This offer I accepted with thanks. Seeing my eyes wandering round in search, he ordered his Master of the Wardrobe, a certain Pretino of Lucca, to let me take whatever I pleased. Then with a pleasant salutation he went off, and I stayed to choose the most beautiful and the best arquebuse that I ever had in my life ; and I took it home with me. Two days later I showed him a few drawings, which he had asked me to make for some works in gold, intended as a gift to his wife, who was then in Naples. Once more I made the same request about the settlement of my affairs. But his Excellency replied that first of all he wished me to make a die for as fine a head of himself as I had made of Pope Clement. So I began this head in wax, and my lord ordered that at whatever hour I came to work on his portrait, I should be shown into him. Seeing that this was to be a long affair, I called in a certain Pietro Pagolo of Monte Ritondo, near Rome, who had been with me as a very young boy there. I found him living with one Bernardonaccio, a goldsmith, who did not treat him very well. So I took him away, and taught him thoroughly how to stamp the money from the dies I had made. In the meanwhile I was engaged on the Duke's portrait. And many a time did I find him snoozing after dinner, alone with his Lorenzino, who afterwards murdered him ; and it was always a great wonder to me that a Duke like him was so blindly trustful.

lxxxi. Now it came about that Ottaviano de' Medici, who to all intents governed everything in Florence, took the part of the old Master of the Mint.

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This fellow, Bastiano Cennini, was out of date, and had little knowledge. But his patron had mixed up his clumsy dies with mine in making the crowns. I complained about it to the Duke, who, finding it to be so, was much grieved, and said, "Go and tell this to Ottaviano de' Medici, and show him what has happened." So off I went and pointed out the injury done to my beautiful coins. But he answered me like a fool, "We like it so ;" whereupon I replied that it was all wrong, and I would not have it. Said he, "And if the Duke is pleased ?" But I answered, "Even then it would not satisfy me, for the thing is neither just nor reasonable." He bade me be off, and said I must swallow it so if I burst. Returning to the Duke, I related the whole of the disagreeable conversation between Ottaviano de' Medici and myself, and begged his Excellency not to let this injury be done to the beautiful coins I had made ; also to give me leave to take my departure. Then he answered, "Ottaviano goes too far. You shall have your own way, for this is an insult to me."

The same day—it was a Thursday—there came to me from Rome an ample safe-conduct from the Pope, telling me to repair to him at once for the pardon of the Saint Maries in the middle of August, so that I might free myself from the charge of homicide. I went to seek the Duke, whom I found in bed, after an excess, as I was told. In little more than two hours I finished what was wanting to his wax medal, and when he saw the thing complete he was much pleased. Then I drew out the safe-conduct, and told him how the Pope had begged me to come back and do certain work for him. Thus I should regain a place in that fair city of Rome ; yet, nevertheless, I should go on with his Excellency's medal. At this the Duke said, half in anger, "Benvenuto, do as I wish. Stop where you are, for I will settle your

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salary and give you the apartments in the Mint, and a great deal more than you would ever think of asking me, for you only ask what is just and reasonable. And whom would you leave to strike the fine dies you have made me?" Then I answered, "My lord, everything has been thought of, for I have here a pupil of mine, a young Roman, whom I have taught; and he will serve your Excellency admirably till I come back, with your medal finished, never to leave you any more. In Rome I have a shop with workmen and a deal of business; but as soon as I have got my pardon, I shall leave all the favour I enjoy there to an apprentice of mine, and then, with your Excellency's gracious leave, return to you." While we were talking, the only one present was Lorenzino de' Medici. Several times the Duke signed to him to urge me to stay, but Lorenzino would say nothing save, "Benvenuto, you would do best to stop here." I replied that I had the greatest desire to regain my old standing in Rome; whereupon he answered nothing, but stood looking at the Duke with the most evil eye. When the medal was finished as I wished, and I had shut it up in its little case, I said to the Duke, "My lord, be my good friend in this matter, for I shall make you a far finer medal than I made for Pope Clement. This is but natural, since that was the first that ever I tried my hand on; and Messer Lorenzino here will provide some beautiful design for the reverse, being a person of learning and the greatest talent." Thereat Lorenzino answered, "I have no other thought in my mind but to give you a reverse worthy of his Excellency." The Duke laughed, and, looking at Lorenzo, said, "You shall give him the reverse, and he shall do it here and not go away." And Lorenzo cried out, "I will do it as speedily as may be, and hope it may be what shall make the world wonder." The Duke, who now looked on him as

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something of a fool, and now as a coward, only turned over in bed and laughed at his words. I then went off without formal leave-taking, and left them alone together. The Duke, who did not believe that I was quitting Florence, said nothing more to me. But when he learned afterwards that I had really set off, he sent a servant after me, who overtook me at Siena, and gave me fifty gold ducats from his Excellency, also a message that I should spend them and remember him ; likewise that I was to come back as soon as I could. "And," said the man, "Messer Lorenzo bids me say he is preparing a marvellous reverse for the medal you are going to make." I had left full instructions with Pietro Pagolo, the Roman of whom I have spoken, as to how he was to stamp the coins ; but the thing was very difficult, and he never did the work very well. I remained the creditor of the Mint for making the dies, to the amount of more than seventy crowns.

lxxii. On my way to Rome, I carried the splendid arquebuse which the Duke had given me, and many a time did I use it on the journey, to my great enjoyment, while the feats I performed with it were extraordinary. At last I reached the City. Now I had a little house in the Strada Giulia, but as it was not ready, I dismounted at the house of Messer Giovanni Gaddi, clerk of the Camera, to whom, on my departure from Rome, I had confided a number of fine weapons and many other things I valued. I did not wish to get down at my shop, but sent for my partner, Felice, and told him to have my little house put into proper order without delay. The next day I went to sleep there, having made a good provision of clothes and other necessary things, as on the morrow I intended to go and see the Pope and thank him. In my employment were two serving lads, and on the floor beneath was a laundress, who cooked for me excellently. I had several friends to

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supper, and the evening having passed most pleasantly, I went to bed. The night was hardly over ; it was more than an hour to dawn, when I heard a tremendous hammering at the door of my house, each knock hurrying on the top of the other. So I called for the elder of my two servants, who was called Cencio (the one whom I took with me to the wizard's circle), and told him to go and see what madman was making this devilish noise at such an hour. While Cencio went down, I lighted another lamp—I kept one burning always during the night —hastily slipped over my shirt a magnificent coat of mail, and above that whatever garments came to hand. Cencio came back crying, “Alas ! my master, it is the Bargello with all his guard ; and he says if you don't make haste, he will beat the door down. And they have torches and all kinds of things with them.” To which I answered, “Tell him I am putting on a rag or two of clothes, and I am coming down in my shirt.” Thinking it was an attempt at murder, such as Signor Pier Luigi had plotted, I took in my right hand a first-rate dagger, and in my left the safe-conduct. Then I ran to the back windows, which gave on some gardens, and there I saw more than thirty of the guards. So I knew that I could not escape by that side. Putting the two lads in front of me, I told them to open the door the very instant I should tell them. Then, quite ready, my dagger in my right hand, the safe-conduct in my left, and in a proper attitude of defence, I said to my lads, “Have no fear. Open the door !” At once Vittorio, the Bargello, with two of the guards, burst in, thinking to seize me without difficulty ; but finding me prepared, they retired, saying, “This is no jesting matter.” On which I called out, throwing them the safe-conduct, “Read that, and since you may not arrest me, I will not let you touch me.” Then the Bargello ordered

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some of his men to lay hands on me, saying the safe-conduct would be seen to later. At this I flashed out my weapon furiously. "God for the right!" I cried. "Alive, I'm not for you. You can only take me dead." The room was crowded. They looked as if they would come at me with force; but I stood grimly on the defensive, and the Bargello saw he could not have me otherwise than I had said. So he called the notary, and while he was having the safe-conduct read, two or three times he made as if he were about to set his guard on me. Yet I stood firm in my resolution. Then, giving up the attempt, they threw the safe-conduct on the ground and made off without me.

lxxxiii. I went back to my rest, but I was so disturbed that I could not fall asleep again. I meant to be bled as soon as it should be daylight, so I asked advice of Messer Giovanni Gaddi, by whom I was sent to a quack of his acquaintance, who asked me if I had had a fright! Now think what a wise doctor he was, who, after hearing of such a serious matter, asked me a question like that! He was a feather-brained fool, who was always laughing, and about nothing at all. So now, sniggering as usual, he told me to take a good beaker of Greek wine, and to be merry, and to keep my mind at rest. Then Messer Giovanni said, "A thing of bronze or marble might tremble in a case like this. How much more a mere man?" Whereupon the quack replied, "Monsignor, we are not all made the same way. This man is neither of bronze nor marble, but of pure iron itself;" and, feeling my pulse, laughing idiotically the while, he said to Messer Giovanni, "Feel here now; this is no man's pulse; it is a lion's or a dragon's." Then as my pulse was beating furiously, perhaps much faster than in any case which that imbecile doctor had read of either in Hippocrates or Galen, I knew how ill I was. But that I might

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not make myself more agitated or worse than I was already, I pretended to be in good heart. Meanwhile Messer Giovanni had ordered dinner, and the whole company sat down to eat. Among us, besides our host, were Messer Lodovico of Fano, Messer Antonio Allegretti, Messer Giovanni Greco, all men of great learning, and Messer Annibal Caro, who was then quite a youth ; and nothing else was talked about at dinner except this brave deed of mine. Moreover, they had the whole story again from my young servant Cencio, who was extraordinarily intelligent, spirited, and handsome. Every time he recounted my fierce daring—taking on my attitude in the encounter, and repeating the very words I had used—he called up circumstances I had forgotten. Then they went on to ask if he had been afraid ; to which he answered they should ask me, for he had felt just as I had done.

This parrot talk wearied me in the end ; and, since I felt much shaken, I rose from table, saying I wished to go and get new suits of cloth and azure silk for Cencio and myself, for I was going to walk in the procession, four days hence, at the Saint Maries, when I intended him to carry a white lighted torch. So I departed and went to have the blue cloth cut, with a fine vest of sarsenet, also blue, and a doublet of the same. For the lad I ordered a doublet and vest of blue taffeta. When the things were cut, I went off to the Pope, who bade me speak with Messer Ambrogio, as he had given orders I was to make a large gold vessel. So I went to find Messer Ambrogio. He knew all about the Bargello affair, and had, indeed, been in alliance with my enemies to bring me back from Florence, and had rated the Bargello well for not having arrested me. That officer excused himself, saying he could not openly defy a safe-conduct. But when I went to him, Messer Ambrogio talked over the

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business which the Pope had given him orders about. He bade me make the designs, and everything would be arranged for the work.

Meanwhile came on the day of the Saint Maries. Now it is the custom that those about to obtain their pardon should surrender themselves prisoners. But I returned to the Pope and said to his Holiness I did not wish to be put in prison, and begged him to let me off. He said that such was the custom, and so it must be. Thereupon I knelt down once more, and thanked him for the safe-conduct he had given me, with which I should return to the service of my Duke of Florence, who waited me in all eagerness. Hearing this, he turned to one of his attendants and said, "Let Benvenuto have his pardon without the prison. Make out his papers to this effect." The document being drawn up, the Pope signed it, and it was registered at the Capitol. Then, on the appointed day, I walked in the procession, in an honourable place between two gentlemen, and received my full pardon.

lxxiv. Four days after I was seized with a very high fever and with a shaking fit. I went to bed, and thought I was about to die. The first physicians in Rome were called in, among whom was one Maestro Francesco da Norcia, the oldest doctor in the city, and the one of most reputation. I explained to the doctors what I believed to be the cause of my grave illness ; that I had wished to be bled, but was advised against it ; and I begged them, if it were not too late, to bleed me now. Maestro Francesco answered that to draw blood now would do me no good, but if it had been done at the right time, I should not have been ill at all. Now he must cure me in some other way. So they enlisted all their zeal and skill for my cure, and every day I got violently worse. At the end of eight days the malady had increased so much that the doctors, despairing of the case,

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ordered that I should be indulged and given anything I asked for. Maestro Francesco said, "While he still breathes call on me at any hour, for one never knows what Nature will do for a young man of this sort ; but if he should become unconscious, give him these five remedies, one on top of the other, and send for me. I will come at any hour of the night. For I should be better pleased to save him than any Cardinal in Rome." Two or three times a day Messer Giovanni Gaddi came to visit me, and every time he would handle my fine gun, or my armour, or my sword, always saying, "This is a fine thing," or "This other is still finer." And the same did he with my models, and with all my other little possessions, till he made me furious. And with him came a certain Mattio Franzesi, who looked as if he were wearying for my death, not because he would come in for anything of mine ; but, as it appeared, he merely wished for what Messer Giovanni had such a longing for.

I had with me Felice, my partner, who gave me the best aid which one man could possibly give to another in this world. My strength was ebbing all away. I had not force enough to draw a breath, but my brain was as sound as when I was in health. Yet though I was not delirious, a terrible old man used to come to my bedside, and try to haul me by force into a great boat. Then I would call for my Felice to come to me and chase the old scoundrel away. Felice, who loved me tenderly, would come running in tears, crying, "Off with you, you old traitor, who would rob me of my all !" Messer Giovanni Gaddi, who was standing by, said, "The poor fellow raves. Ah ! he'll not last long ;" while the other man, Mattio Franzesi, added, "He has read Dante, and in his utter weakness his mind wanders ;" then with a laugh, "Be off, you old rascal ! don't vex our Benvenuto !" I saw they

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were laughing at me ; so I turned to Messer Giovanni Gaddi and said to him, " My dear master, I would have you know that I am not raving, and that it is the truth, this old man annoys me very much. But you would do well to take that villain Mattio out of my sight, for he laughs at my misfortunes ; and the next time your lordship is good enough to come and see me, let it be with Messer Antonio Allegretti, or Messer Annibal Caro, or any other of your distinguished acquaintances, men of taste and intelligence, and of quite another stamp from this brute here." Then Messer Giovanni said in joke to Mattio to be off and never come back again ; but as Mattio still laughed, the joke became serious, for Messer Giovanni refused to see him again, and sent for Messer Antonio Allegretti and Messer Lodovico and Messer Annibal Caro. As soon as these worthy men had come, I was much comforted, and talked with them quite sensibly, yet every now and then entreating Felice to drive away the old man. Messer Lodovico asked me who it was I saw, and what he was like. While I was drawing his picture exactly in words, the old man took hold of my arm and hauled me forcibly towards him, so that I called out to them to help me, for he was going to throw me down to the bottom of his fearsome boat. At these last words I fell into a deep swoon, and it seemed to me that I was being thrown into the boat. They said that while I lay unconscious, I tossed about and cast evil words at Messer Giovanni, telling him he came to rob me, and not for love of me at all, and a great many other accusations which put him greatly to the blush. Then, they said, I stopped as if I were dead ; and when more than an hour had come and gone, and I seemed to be growing cold, they left me for dead. Then they went home and told Mattio Franzesi, who wrote to my dearest friend, Messer Benedetto Varchi, at Florence, that at such and

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such an hour of the night they had seen me die. That man of great talent, and my most dear friend, hearing this false report of my death, made an admirable sonnet, which shall be set down in its own place.

More than three hours passed ere I came to myself; and having applied all the physician's remedies, and seeing that I still did not revive, my beloved Felice set off running to Maestro Francesco of Norcia's house. He knocked so loud that he awoke him and made him rise. Weeping, he begged him to come to my house, for he thought I was dead. Whereupon Maestro Francesco, who was a very hot-tempered man, called down, "My son, what do you think I should do if I came? If he is dead, I am sorrier than you. Do you think that by coming with my medicine I could blow life into his body?" But seeing that the poor lad went off crying, he called him back, and gave him a certain oil wherewith to anoint my pulses and my heart, and told him to squeeze my little toes and little fingers very hard; adding that if I came to, he was to be sent for at once. Felice left Maestro Francesco and did his bidding. When it was almost daylight, and hope was given up by the watchers, orders were given to make my shroud and to wash my body. All of a sudden I came to myself, and called out to Felice to drive off the old man who was plaguing me, and, quick, quick, I said. Whereupon Felice wanted to send for Maestro Francesco; but I said no; he was to come to me and drive away the old man, who was afraid of him. When Felice came to my bedside, and I touched him, the furious old wretch seemed to make off; so I begged him to stay by me all the time. But Maestro Francesco came at last, and he said he was determined to save me in spite of everything, and that he had never seen greater force in any young man than in me. Then, sitting down to write, he ordered

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perfumes, lotions, unguents, plasters, and all sorts of wonderful things. In the meanwhile, having had more than twenty leeches applied to my posteriors, I came to, but I felt as if I had been pierced, bound, and pulverised. Many of my friends came to see the miracle of the revived corpse, and among them men of the greatest importance. In their presence I said that the little gold I had—which might amount to eight hundred crowns, between gold, silver, jewels, and loose money—I wished to be given to my poor sister in Florence, who was called Mona Liperata. All the rest of my belongings, including my armour, I bequeathed to my beloved Felice, and fifty gold ducats besides, so that he might buy himself clothing. Hearing this, Felice fell on my neck, saying he wished for nothing but that I should live. Then I said, “If you wish me to live, put your hand on me as before, and cry to that old man to be off, for he is afraid of you.” At these words some of them were terrified, for they said I was not raving, but spoke reasonably and with a clear head.

So my illness lingered on, and I got little better. The most excellent Maestro Francesco came four or five times a day, but Messer Giovanni Gaddi, who had been shamed, never came to see me any more. My brother-in-law, however, the husband of my sister Liperata, turned up from Florence to claim the inheritance; but he was a very good fellow and was delighted to find me alive. I was comforted more than I can tell by the sight of him, and he showed me the utmost affection, saying he had only come to nurse me with his own hands. And he did so for several days. After that I sent him away, the hope of my recovery being by that time almost sure. It was then he left the sonnet of Messer Benedetto Varchi. Here it is:—

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ON THE SUPPOSED DEATH OF BENVENUTO CELLINI, WHO WAS YET ALIVE.

Who shall console us, Mattio ? Who shall tell
Our eyes to cease their weeping o'er his bier ?
Ah, the hard truth, that leaving us down here,
In youthful haste, he has gone up to dwell !
Clear, friendly soul, in art thou didst excel
All that did come before thee. Much I fear
The world shall never see again thy peer,
The world, of which the best take first farewell.
O gentle spirit, if beyond our haze
Still thou mayst love, look on me from the sky.
'Tis not thy bliss I weep, but mine own ill.
Now from thy place in Heaven thou dost gaze
On the High Father ; seest Him face to face
Whom thou didst shadow with thy mortal skill.

lxxxv. My malady had been so terrible that it seemed as if it would never end ; and that good man Francesco da Norcia gave himself more trouble than ever, and every day he kept bringing me new remedies, striving to repair that poor disordered instrument, my body. Yet with all these extraordinary efforts, it seemed impossible to weaken the malady's persistent hold on me ; so that the doctors were almost in despair, and did not know what further they could do. I had an insatiable thirst, yet I had refrained from drinking for many days, in obedience to orders. Felice, who was very proud of having saved my life, never left me ; and the old man troubled me less, though he still came to me sometimes in my dreams. But one day Felice had gone out, and an apprentice was left as nurse, with a servant called Beatrice. I asked the apprentice what had become of my lad Cencio, and why I had never seen him waiting on me. The lad told me that Cencio had been much more ill than I, and that now he lay at the point of death. Felice had ordered them not to tell me this.

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I was greatly grieved at the news, and I called Beatrice, the servant, a girl from Pistoja, and begged her to fill a great crystal wine-cooler, that stood near, with clear fresh water, and to bring it to me. The girl ran at once and brought it to me full. I asked her to hold it to my mouth, and promised, if she would let me drink as long a draught as I wished, I'd give her a gown. Now this servant had stolen a few little things of some importance, and in her terror lest the theft should be found out, she would have been glad for me to die. Therefore she let me drink twice of the water, and as much as I could each time, so that in truth I drank more than a flask. Then I lay down under the bedclothes, began to perspire, and fell asleep. Felice came back after I had slept about an hour, and asked the lad how I was. "I don't know," said the boy ; "Beatrice brought him that wine-cooler full of water, and he has nearly drunk it all. I don't know now if he be dead or alive." They say the poor young fellow almost fell down in a swoon from the vexation he felt. Then taking a thick stick he beat the servant furiously, crying, "Alas, traitress ! you have killed him." But while Felice was belabouring her, and she was howling, I dreamt. It seemed to me that I saw the old man again with ropes in his hand, and he was preparing to bind me with them. Felice now came on the scene, and was attacking him with a hatchet, so that the old wretch ran away, crying "Let me go, and I shan't come back again in a hurry !" Meanwhile Beatrice ran into my room, screaming at the top of her voice. This woke me up, and I said, "Let her alone, for perhaps in meaning me harm, she has done me more good than you ever have been able to, with all your devotion. But come now and help me, for I am all of a sweat. Quick !" Felice took heart again, dried me, and made me comfortable ; and feeling greatly better, I became assured of my recovery.

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When Maestro Francesco came, he saw the great improvement in me, also the servant weeping, the prentice running hither and thither, and Felice laughing. This confusion made the doctor think some extraordinary thing had happened, which had worked this change in me for the better. Meanwhile, the other doctor, Maestro Bernardino, had come in, the one who, in the beginning, had not wished me to be bled. Maestro Francesco, that splendid fellow, cried out, "Oh, power of Nature ! she knows her own needs. We doctors know nothing." Whereupon that fool of a Maestro Bernardino answered, "If only he had drunk another flask, he would have been cured at once." But Maestro Francesco, a venerable man, and of great authority, replied, "Please God that such a misfortune fall on your own head !" Then turning to me, he asked me if I could have drunk more. "No," I answered, "for I had quenched my thirst." Then to Maestro Bernardino he said, "See you, Nature had just satisfied her needs, neither more nor less. So was she craving what she needed, when the poor young man requested to be bled. If you knew that the saving of him depended on his drinking two flasks of water, why did you not say so before ? Then you would have got the credit." At these words the quack went off in a surly temper, and he never turned up any more.

Then Maestro Francesco said I must be taken out of the room where I lay ; and he had me carried up to one of the hills of Rome. Cardinal Cornaro, hearing of my recovery, had me brought to a place of his on Monte Cavallo. That very night I was carried with the utmost care in a chair, well covered, and not jostled. As soon as I arrived, I began to vomit, and in the vomit which I brought up was a hairy worm, a quarter of a cubit in length. The hairs were long, and the worm was most hideous, and covered with different coloured spots, green,

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black, and red. They kept it for the doctor, who declared he had never seen such a thing. Then he said to Felice, "Now take good care of your Benvenuto, for he is cured. Don't allow him any excesses. For though he has escaped this time, yet another disorder would kill him. You see his sickness has been so serious, that had we been bringing him the holy oil, we might have come too late. Now I am sure that with a little patience and time he will still do fine work." Then turning to me, he said, "Benvenuto, my friend, be wise, and lead a regular life; and when you are cured, I want you to make me a Madonna with your own hand, and I will say my prayers to her always for love of you." Afterwards I asked him whether I might prudently move to Florence. He told me that I should get a little stronger first, and wait to see what Nature did for me.

lxxxvi. After eight days had passed, the improvement was so little that I was aweary of myself; for I had been more than fifty days in this great trouble. But making up my mind, I prepared to set off; and in a double basket-litter my dear Felice and I departed for Florence. Now as I had not written beforehand, when I got to my sister's house, she wept and laughed over me at the same time. That day many of my friends came to see me, among them Pier Landi, the best and the dearest I ever had in the world. Next day came a certain Niccolò da Monte Aguto, also a very great friend of mine. Now he had heard the Duke say, "Benvenuto would have done much better if he had died, for he has come here to run his head into a halter; and I shall never pardon him." So Niccolò came to me in despair, and said, "Alas, dear Benvenuto, what are you doing here? Do you not know how you have offended the Duke? I have heard him swear that you were running your head into a halter, for a

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certainty." Then I answered, "Niccolò, recall to his Excellency that Pope Clement wanted to hang me before now, and with as little justice. Let him keep a look out on me, and leave me until I am better. Then I can prove to his lordship that I have been the most faithful servant he will ever have in the whole course of his life ; and since some enemy must have done me this ill turn out of jealousy, let him wait till I get my health, and I can render such an account of myself as will astonish him."

Now this ill turn I owed to the painter Giorgetto Vassellario of Arezzo, perhaps in return for many good turns I had done him. For I had given him hospitality in Rome and paid his expenses, though he had been a most troublesome guest ; for he suffered from a dry skin disease, and his hands were all wasted from continual scratching. Now he had slept with a good young fellow in my employment, called Manno ; and when he thought he was scratching himself, he had taken the skin off one of Manno's legs with his dirty hands, the nails of which he never cut. Manno left me, and, indeed, was determined to have his life ; but I reconciled them. Afterwards I got an opening for Giorgio with the Cardinal de' Medici, and continued to help him. It was for this I had deserved his slanderous report to the Duke Alessandro that I had spoken ill of his Excellency, and had boasted I should be the first to scale the walls of Florence, in company with his exiled enemies. These words, according to what I heard later, had been put into his mouth by that gallant gentleman Ottaviano de' Medici, who wanted to revenge himself for the Duke's rating him in the matter of the coins, and my consequent departure from Florence. But I, who was innocent of this treason unjustly put to my count, had no fear in the world. And meanwhile the clever doctor, Francesco da Montevarchi,

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treated me with the greatest skill. He had been introduced by my friend Luca Martini, who stayed the greater part of every day with me.

lxxxvii. In the meantime I had sent my devoted Felice to Rome to look after my business there. As soon as I could just raise my head from the pillow, which was at the end of fifteen days, though I could not yet put my feet to the ground, I had myself carried to the little upper terrace of the Medici palace. There I was seated to wait till the Duke should go by. Many of my friends of the Court came to speak to me, and they were greatly astonished I had given myself the pain of being carried in this fashion, while still in such a weak condition. I might have waited, they said, till I was quite better, and then have gone to see the Duke. There was a crowd of people about me, all looking at me as if I were a miracle, and this not so much because they had heard I was dead ; still stranger to them was it that now I looked like a corpse. Then I said before them all, how my lord the Duke had been told by some foul-tongued rascal that I had boasted I should be the first to scale his Excellency's walls, and that, moreover, I had spoken ill of him. Thus I had not the heart to live or die till I should purge myself of this infamous accusation, and know who was the bold slanderer that had spread the false report. As I spoke, a large number of the gentlemen gathered round me. They manifested great sympathy for me, and while one said one thing and one another, I declared that I would never go away from here till I knew who was my accuser. At these words Maestro Agustino, the Duke's tailor, made his way through the crowd of nobles, and said, "If that's all you want to know, you can learn it now." At the very moment Giorgio, the painter, of whom I have spoken, was passing ; and Maestro Agustino said, "There's the man who accused you. Now you know best if it be true or not."

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I could not move from the spot, but I hotly demanded of Giorgio if this was the case. Giorgio said No ; it was not true, and he had never said any such thing. To this Maestro Agustino replied, "O you gallows bird ! don't you know that I know it perfectly ?" Thereupon Giorgio made off in haste, still protesting he was not the man. In a little the Duke came along. I had myself propped up in front of his Excellency, and he stopped. I told him I had come here like this only to justify myself. The Duke looked at me, and wondered I was alive. Then he told me to give my mind to being an honest man, and to getting well. When I returned home, Niccolò da Monte Aguto came to see me, and told me I had passed through one of the most perilous storms in the world, and he never could have believed I should escape ; for he had seen my evil fate written with unfading ink. But now I was to think of getting well speedily ; and then I must be out of this, for danger threatened me from a powerful quarter, and at the hands of a man who had the means of doing me hurt. Then, "Look out !" he said, adding, "What harm have you done to that scoundrel Ottaviano de' Medici ?" I replied, I had never done him any harm, but that he had done me many an ill turn ; and I told him all about the Mint affair. Then said he again, "Be off as speedily as you can ; but be of good heart, for sooner than you think, you will see yourself revenged." So I did my best to get well, and advised Pietro Pagolo in the matter of the stamping of the coins. Then I set off for Rome, without notice to the Duke or any one else.

lxxxviii. When I got back to Rome, I amused myself among my friends, and then began the Duke's medal. In a few days I had completed the head in steel, and it was the finest thing of the kind I had ever done. Now there came to see me, at least once a day, a certain Messer Francesco Soderini, a fool of

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a man. Seeing what I was working at, he kept on saying to me over and over again, "Ah! you heartless creature! You are bent then on immortalising that mad tyrant! And since you have never done anything so beautiful before, it is plain you are as much our determined enemy as you are their warm friend; though the Pope and the Duke have twice tried to hang you without cause. So much for the Father and the Son; look out for the Holy Ghost!" It was fully believed, I should say, that Duke Alessandro was Pope Clement's son. Moreover, Messer Francesco used to say, and firmly swear, that if he could, he would have stolen the dies for the medal. I answered that he had done well to tell me, and that I should take care he should never get a sight of them again.

I sent word to Florence to ask Lorenzino to send me the reverse of the medal. Niccolò da Monte Aguto, to whom I had written, answered me to the effect that he had asked that mad, melancholy philosopher Lorenzino for it, who had replied, that night or day he thought of nothing else; and that he would do it as soon as ever he could. Yet, said he, I was not to depend upon his reverse, but to invent one for myself; and as soon as I had finished it, bring it boldly to the Duke, and it would be a good thing for me. So I drew what seemed a fitting design, and put my best energy into the work; but as I was not yet set up after my terrible illness, I often amused myself out shooting with my dear Felice. He, by the way, knew nothing of my craft, but as we were always together, night and day, every one supposed him to be a most skilled artist. So as he was a pleasant-tempered fellow, many a time we laughed about the great reputation he had won. Now his name was Felice Guadagni [Gain]; so he used to joke with me, saying, "I should be called Felice Guadagni-poco [Gain-little], if you hadn't got

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me such credit that I can call myself Guadagni-assai [Gain-much]." But I told him there were two ways of earning : by the first, one gains for one's self ; by the second, for others ; and then I praised the second method much more than the first—seeing he had won back for me my life.

We had many and many a talk together, but there was one day in particular — in Epiphany it was—when we were near La Magliana, and evening was coming on. That day a good many wild ducks and geese had fallen to my gun. When I had made up my mind to shoot no more, we turned our faces towards Rome. I called my dog Barucco, but not seeing him in front of me, I turned and spied the well-trained creature watching certain geese that were huddled in a ditch. So I got down at once, loaded my little gun, and at a long range brought down two with one ball. I never used to shoot with more ; and even when I shot at two hundred cubits, I mostly hit my mark—and this can't be done in any other way. Of my two geese, one was almost dead, and the other was wounded and struggling to fly. My dog went for the first and fetched it back to me ; while, seeing the other plunge right into the ditch, I jumped down after it. Trusting to my boots, which were very high, I thrust out one foot and it stuck in the mud. Thus, though I caught the goose, my right boot was full of water. Lifting it up, I emptied the water, and then mounting, we hurried on to Rome. But the cold was extreme, and I felt my leg freezing ; so I said to Felice, "Something must be done for my leg ; I cannot bear it any longer." Without another word, the good Felice got down from his horse, and gathered thistles and twigs to light a fire. But while I waited, I had thrust my hands among the breast-feathers of the geese, and it was very warm there. So I did not let him kindle the fire, but stuffed my

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boot with goose's feathers, and all at once I felt such comfort that my life came back to me.

lxxxix. Mounting again, we rode in hot haste towards Rome. It was night by the time we reached a certain rising ground. There, looking towards Florence, we both of us with one accord cried out in wonder, "O God of Heaven ! what marvel is this that we see above Florence ?" It looked like a great beam of fire, which radiated a glorious light. I said to Felice, "For certain, we shall hear to-morrow that some great event has come to pass in Florence." When we got back to Rome it was pitch dark, and as we reached the neighbourhood of the Banks, near our own house, my little horse was ambling on at a great pace. Now that very day they had piled up a heap of plaster and broken tiles in the middle of the street, and neither my horse nor I saw it. He rushed upon it furiously, and coming down on the other side, he fell, his head between his legs ; and if I got no hurt, it was truly by God's help. Out came all the neighbours' lights at the great noise ; but I rose quickly to my feet, and without mounting again I ran home, laughing heartily at having so barely escaped breaking my neck. On reaching my house, I found some friends of mine, and while we were having supper, I told them of all the accidents of the chase, and of that devilry in the sky—the beam of fire we had seen. Some of them said, "What meaning shall to-morrow give to this ?" And I answered, "This marvel means some great event that has taken place in Florence." And so supper passed by pleasantly. Next day, late, came the news of the death of Duke Alessandro. So, many of my acquaintances came to me and said, "You spoke the truth, that in Florence some great event had happened." And then came Messer Francesco Soderini, jogging along on his old mule, laughing all the way like a fool, and saying, "This is the reverse of that rascally

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tyrant's medal, which your Lorenzino de' Medici promised you," adding, "You would immortalise dukes for us, would you? We'll have no more dukes;" and then he mocked at me, as if I had been head of the faction that makes the dukes. Then in came a certain Baccio Bettini, whose ugly head was as big as a corbel, and he, too, railed at me about dukes, saying, "We've unduked them. We'll have no more dukes! And you who would make them immortal for us!" and other wearisome jokes of the kind. This was too much for me in the end, and I burst out, "O you fools! I am a poor goldsmith, and I serve him who pays me; yet you rail at me as if I were the head of a party. Nevertheless, I won't cast up to you the greed, the folly, the cowardice of men like you in the past. But in answer to your foolish laughter, I tell you plainly that, before two or three days have gone by, you shall have another duke, and may be a much worse one than the last." Next day Bettini came to my shop and said, "What is the good of spending money on couriers, for you know things before they come to pass? What spirit tells them to you?" And he told me that Cosimo de' Medici, son of Lord Giovanni, was made Duke; but he was bound by certain conditions, so that he could not cut capers just as he liked. Then I began to laugh at this, saying, "Those Florentines have mounted a young man on a splendid horse; they have given him spurs, put the reins freely in his hand, set him out in a magnificent field full of flowers and fruits and all kinds of delicious things; then they tell him he must not pass certain prescribed boundaries. Now, tell me, who is he that can hold him in, once he has a mind to pass them? Laws cannot be enforced on the law's master." So they left me alone, and didn't trouble me any more.

xc. Then I gave my attention to my shop, and went on with my business, which was not, however,

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of great importance at the time, for I was taking good care of my health, as it did not seem quite assured after the serious illness through which I had passed.

Meanwhile the Emperor had come back victorious after his Tunis expedition; and the Pope sent for me to ask my advice concerning a suitable gift for his Majesty. Whereupon I said that, in my opinion, the most fitting gift would be a golden crucifix, for which I had almost completed an ornament: this would be just the right thing, and would do infinite credit to his Holiness and to me. I had already made three little golden figures in the round, of the length of a palm. Indeed, these were the Faith, Hope, and Charity I had designed for Pope Clement's chalice. Then I added in wax what was still needed for the foot of the cross, and when I took it to the Pope, with the Christ in wax, and a great many beautiful accessories, he was greatly pleased. Before I parted from his Holiness, we had come to an understanding on all that was to be done, and estimated the cost of the work.

This was one evening at four hours after sundown, and the Pope ordered Messer Latino Juvenale to provide me with the money next morning. It pleased this Messer Latino, who had a great vein of foolishness in him, to suggest a new design to the Pope, which he made out of his own head. This upset all our arrangements; and in the morning, when I went for the money, he said with his brutal impudence, "It is for us to invent; for you to execute. Before I left the Pope last evening, we thought of something far better." But I cut into his words with, "Neither you nor the Pope could think of anything better than a design where Christ comes in. So out with all your courtier's tomfooleries. I don't care a hang!" Without another word he left me in a rage, and did his best to have the work given to another goldsmith. But the Pope

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would not have this ; and sending for me in haste, he told me that I had given him good advice, but that they wished to make use of a little book of the Hours of the Virgin, in which there were wonderful miniatures. It had cost the Cardinal de' Medici more than two thousand crowns. This would be a very suitable gift to the Empress ; and for the Emperor they would afterwards make what I had designed, which in truth would be a present worthy of him. He only proposed this arrangement because there was little time ; for the Emperor was expected in Rome in a month and a half or so. For this book he wanted a cover made of solid gold, richly worked, and studded thickly with jewels, worth about six thousand crowns. So when I had received the materials, I set about the work, giving all my mind to it, and in a few days its beauty was so manifest, that the Pope marvelled, and heaped compliments on me. It was understood that the brute Juvenale should not come near me.

When the work was nearly finished, the Emperor arrived. Many triumphal arches of wonderful splendour were raised in his honour ; and he entered Rome with extraordinary pomp. But that I'll leave to others to describe, for I have no mind to speak save of what concerns myself. Immediately on his arrival, he presented the Pope with a diamond which he had bought for twelve thousand crowns. His Holiness sent for me, and giving me this diamond, said I was to make a ring to his measure. But first he wished me to bring the book just as it was. This I did, and he was greatly pleased. Then he consulted me as to what excuse he could make to the Emperor for the work being incomplete. I suggested that a plausible excuse would be my illness, which his Majesty would be ready to believe, seeing me so worn and wan. To this the Pope answered that that would do very well ; but that I was to add,

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from him, when I presented the book, that I made him a present of myself as well. Then he told me how I was to comport myself, and what words I should say. I repeated these words to him, asking him if he would be satisfied, did I say them so. "You could not do better," he replied, "if you have the courage to speak to the Emperor as you do to me." Then I answered that I should have far greater courage in speaking to the Emperor, seeing that he was clad like me, and that it would seem as if I were addressing a man made like myself; which was not the case when I spoke to his Holiness, in whom I saw a far greater divinity, partly because of his ecclesiastical trappings, which were as a kind of halo about him, and partly because of the fine venerable appearance of his Holiness. Both these things bred greater awe in me than did any Emperor. To this the Pope replied, "Go, Benvenuto mine, you are a very clever man. Do us credit, and it will be well for you."

xci. The Pope had two Turkish horses, which had belonged to Pope Clement, the finest that ever were seen in Christendom. He ordered Messer Durante, his chamberlain, to lead them through the corridors of the palace, and then present them to the Emperor, with a little speech which he had composed for him. Down we went together, and came into the presence. The two horses entered, and made their way through the apartments so spiritedly and with such majesty, that the Emperor and every one marvelled. Then Messer Durante stepped out most awkwardly, and knotting up his tongue in his mouth, muttered something in his Brescian dialect; and never was anything clumsier seen or heard. Even the Emperor could not quite keep from laughing. Meanwhile, I had already uncovered my work, and noticing that his Majesty had turned his eyes graciously on me, I stepped forward at once, and said: "Sacred Majesty,

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our most holy Pope Paul sends this book of the Madonna as a gift to you. The writing and the miniatures are the work of a master most famous in his art, and this rich cover of gold and jewels is thus incomplete, as you see, by reason of my indisposition. Therefore, his Holiness presents me to you along with the book, that I may finish it near your Majesty's person. Moreover, whatever your Majesty has a mind to have done, in that will I serve you while I live." To this the Emperor answered: "The book is pleasing to me, and so are you. But I wish you to finish it for me in Rome. And when it is finished, and you are recovered, bring it to me yourself." Afterwards in talking with me, he called me by my name, at which I wondered, for my name had come into nothing that had been said. But he told me he had seen the button of Pope Clement's cope, on which I had fashioned such wonderful designs. And so our conversation stretched out to a whole half-hour; and we talked agreeably on many different things concerning art. Then when I thought I had gone through the affair with much greater honour than I had looked for, a pause in the conversation gave me a chance to take my leave. The Emperor was heard to say, "Give five hundred crowns to Benvenuto." The man who fetched them asked on his return who was the Pope's man who had spoken to the Emperor. Then out stepped Messer Durante, and stole away my five hundred crowns. I went and complained to the Pope, who told me not to fear, for he knew everything, and how well I had conducted myself and spoken in the presence of the Emperor; and that assuredly I should have my share of the money.

xcii. Returning to my shop, I gave all my mind to finishing the diamond ring. About this business there came to me four of the first jewellers in Rome. The Pope had heard that the diamond had been set

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by the hand of the most famous jeweller in the world, a Venetian called Miliano Targhetta. Now as the stone was somewhat thin, it was too difficult a matter to set about without much consultation. I had a high opinion of those jewellers, though among them was a Milanese called Gaio, the most conceited beast in the world, who knew less than any of the others, and thought he knew most of all. The rest were very modest and capable men. Messer Gaio before them all began to speak thus : “ Preserve Miliano’s tint ; and take off your hat to it, Benvenuto ; for as tinting a diamond is the most beautiful and most difficult process in the jeweller’s art, so Miliano is the greatest jeweller that ever lived, and this is the most difficult of diamonds.” Then I answered that it would be all the more honour for me to compete with so first-rate a master ; and turning to the others, I said, “ Look, I am preserving Miliano’s tint ; and I am going to try if I cannot better it by my own invention. If not, we shall tint it again with this same. Then that fool Gaio said if I did it like that, he would gladly take off his hat to it ; and I replied, “ Then if I do it better, two reverences are its due.” “ That’s so,” he answered ; and I began to make up my tints.

With the greatest diligence I set about the work, the method of which I shall explain in its own place. Without a doubt, this diamond was more difficult to treat than any other I have met with before or after ; and that tint of Miliano’s was made with very great art. However, I had no fear, and giving my very best brains to it, I produced what not merely equalled, but was far better than the other. Then seeing I had surpassed my rival, I now strove to surpass myself, and made a tint by new methods, which was ever so much finer than my first attempts. So I sent for the jewellers, and first tinted the diamond with Miliano’s tint ; then after cleaning it,

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I retinted it with my own. When I had shown it to the jewellers, one of the principal of them, whose name was Raffaello del Moro, took the diamond in his hand, and said to Gaio, "Benvenuto has surpassed the tint of Milano." Gaio, who was unwilling to believe this, also took up the stone and said, "Benvenuto, this diamond is worth two thousand ducats more than it was with Milano's tint." Then I answered, "Since I have beaten Milano, let us now see if I can beat myself;" and I begged them to wait a little. So I went up to a little cupboard, where, out of their sight, I retinted the diamond, and then brought it back to them. Gaio cried out, "This is the most wonderful thing I have ever seen in all the days of my life, for now this diamond is worth eighteen thousand crowns, while we estimated it at hardly twelve!" The other jewellers, turning to Gaio, said, "Benvenuto is the glory of our art, and before his tints we must duly bare our heads." Then Gaio went on, "I want to go and tell the Pope; and I am determined he shall have a thousand golden crowns for setting the diamond." So he ran to his Holiness and told him all; and the Pope sent three times that day to ask if the ring was finished. An hour before night-fall I took it to him; and as the door was never closed to me, I lifted the portière discreetly, and saw the Pope with the Marquis of Guasto, who was trying to force him to do something he didn't want to do, for I heard his Holiness answer, "I say no. My part is to be neutral, and nothing else." As I was quickly withdrawing, his Holiness called me, whereupon I returned at once with the fine diamond in my hand. He took me aside, and the Marquis drew back. While the Pope was looking at the diamond he said to me, "Benvenuto, start a conversation with me as if it were something important, and don't stop while the Marquis stays in

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the room." Then he began walking about. I was quite pleased, for the thing was all to my good, and I described how I had contrived to tint the diamond. Meanwhile, as I have said, the Marquis stood apart from us, leaning against a tapestry hanging on the wall, now twisting about on one foot and now on the other. The subject of our conversation was so important, and needed so much explanation, that we might have talked of it for three whole hours ; and the Pope was so much interested that he never thought how weary the Marquis must be standing there. In my conversation I had mingled such philosophy as belongs to my profession, so that my dissertation went on for nearly an hour. Then the Marquis, tired to death, got in a rage and went out. The Pope was more affectionate than you can imagine, and said, "Wait, my Benvenuto, for I have a better reward in store for your merit than the thousand crowns which Gaio told me your labour was worth." Then I departed, and the Pope sang my praises before his courtiers, among whom was Latino Juvenale, of whom I have already spoken. Now he, who had become my enemy, tried zealously to do me a mischief ; but seeing that his Holiness spoke of me with so much affection and so forcibly, he said, "Benvenuto is a man of wonderful talents ; not a doubt of it. But every man is naturally bound to love his own country more than that of others. Still we should consider carefully how it behoves us to speak of a Pope. He has been heard to say that Pope Clement had the finest person of any prince that ever lived, and was extraordinarily gifted, but that he had no luck ; while he says of your Holiness just the opposite, and that you're a sad sight with the tiara on your head ; that you look like a dressed-up bundle of straw, and that your good luck is really all you can boast of." These words were of such weight, out of the mouth of him who knew exactly how to

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say them with effect, that the Pope believed them. Not only had I never said them, but I had never thought of saying them. If the Pope could have found any pretext, he would have done me a very ill turn ; but, like the clever man he was, he pretended to laugh at the thing. Nevertheless, he nursed such a deep hatred for me as cannot be told, and I began to be aware of it when I had no longer the same free entrance to him as before, and indeed could only see him with the greatest difficulty. As I had a long acquaintance with the papal court, I guessed some one had done me an ill turn, and, searching prudently into the thing, I learned all that had been said, but not the name of him who slandered me. Nor could I think who he might be. Had I only known, I shouldn't have measured my revenge too nicely.

xciii. Meanwhile I was finishing my little book, and when it was done I took it to the Pope, who, in truth, couldn't keep from praising it highly. So I asked him to send me with it as he had promised. He answered that he would do his duty in the matter, and that my part was completed. Then he ordered that I should be well paid. For these works, which had taken me rather more than two months, I got five hundred crowns. For the diamond I got one hundred and fifty crowns—no more ; all the rest was for the work on the little book, which yet was worth more than a thousand, for it was richly ornamented with figures and foliage, with enamelling and jewels. I took what I could get, and made up my mind to leave Rome there and then. Meanwhile the Pope sent my little book to the Emperor by one of his nephews called Signor Sforza. When he had presented the gift, the Emperor was much pleased, and immediately asked for me. Young Signor Sforza, who knew his lesson, said I had not come because I was ill. Everything was reported to me.

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In the meantime I was making preparations for going to France, and I meant to go alone ; but a young fellow who lived with me, called Ascanio, prevented that. This youth was of very tender years, and was the most admirable servant in the world. I took him from a former master of his, called Francesco, a Spanish goldsmith. I did not wish to take the boy, being anxious to avoid a quarrel with the Spaniard, so I said to Ascanio, " You had better not come to me, lest I anger your master." But he managed to persuade Francesco to write me a letter saying I was at liberty to engage him. Now he had been with me a good many months. When he left his former service he was thin and wan, and we called him, therefore, Il Vecchino (the little old man) ; and indeed I thought he was such, partly because he served me so well, and partly because he was so knowing that it did not seem natural he should be as clever as that at thirteen years old, as he said he was. But now to return to my story. In a few months his health was restored ; he put on flesh, and became the handsomest boy in Rome. And since he was an excellent servant, as I have said, and wonderfully quick at learning our art, I felt like a father to him, and clothed him as if he had been my own child. When he saw himself in such good condition, he thought he had been lucky in having fallen into my hands ; and he would often go and thank his master, who had been the means of it. Now this man had a beautiful young wife, and she said to the lad, " Surge-to " (so they called him when he stayed with them), " what have you done to grow so beautiful ? " And Ascanio replied, " Madonna Francesca, it is my master who has made me so handsome, and so much better, too." The little spiteful thing took it very ill that Ascanio said this ; and as she had the name of not being a modest lady, she managed to show

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the lad more attention than was honest. So I noticed that he used to go to see his mistress much oftener than he had been wont. Now one day he gave a cruel beating to one of the little shop-boys. As soon as I came back from an outing, the child complained to me with many tears that Ascanio had beaten him for no reason at all. Whereupon I said to Ascanio, "With reason, or without, never lay your hand on any of my household again, or you'll feel the weight of mine." He spoke back to me; whereupon I set on him, and with hands and feet gave him the soundest thrashing he ever had in his life. As soon as he escaped from my hands he ran out, without cloak or cap, and for two days I did not know in the least where he was—nor did I take any steps to find him. At the end of that time a Spanish gentleman, called Don Diego, came to speak to me. He was the most liberal man I have ever known in the world. I had done, and was now doing some work for him, so that he was a great friend of mine. He told me Ascanio had gone back to his old master, and if I thought good, he begged me to send him the cap and cloak which I had given him. To this I answered that Francesco had done ill, and that he had behaved like a boor; for if he had told me, as soon as Ascanio had gone to him, that the boy was in his house, I should very willingly have allowed him to stop there. But he had kept him two days before letting me know it, and I therefore refused to let the boy remain. So let him look out I did not catch the lad in his house, I said. Don Diego handed on this message, and Francesco only made fun of it. Next morning I saw Ascanio working at some trashy things in wire by his master's side. On my passing, Ascanio did me reverence, but Francesco all but laughed in my face. Yet through Don Diego he sent once more to beg me to be good enough to send Ascanio the clothes

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I had given him. If not, it did not matter, for Ascanio should not want for clothes. When I had listened to his message, I turned to Don Diego and said, "Signor Don Diego, in all your dealings with me you have proved yourself the most liberal and the honestest man of my acquaintance; but this Francesco is just the opposite; he is a faithless scoundrel. Tell him from me, that if before vespers he has not brought back Ascanio to my shop himself, I will certainly be the death of him; and tell Ascanio that if he does not get out of the place by that time, I will do little less to him." Don Diego made me no answer, but went and put such a terror on Francesco that he did not know what to do. Meanwhile Ascanio had gone in search of his father, who had come to Rome from Tagliacozzo, of which place he was a native. When he heard of the trouble, he also advised Francesco to bring back Ascanio to me. So Francesco said to the lad, "Go without me; your father shall accompany you." But Don Diego answered, "Francesco, I see some great trouble in front of us. You know what Benvenuto is better than I. Take the boy back without fail, and I will come with you." I had made my preparations, and was pacing up and down the shop, waiting for vespers to ring, and all ready to perpetrate one of the most terrible deeds of my life. Just then in came Don Diego, Francesco, Ascanio, and his father, whom I did not know. When Ascanio entered, I looked at them with a wrathful eye, while Francesco, pale as death, said, "See, I have brought Ascanio back to you. In keeping him I did not mean to offend you." And Ascanio said respectfully, "My master, forgive me. I am here to do whatever you bid me." Then I said, "Have you come to complete the time for which you bound yourself?" He said, "Yes," and that he never wished to go away again. Then I told the little

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shop-boy whom he had beaten to bring the bundle of clothes, and I said to him, "There are all the clothes I gave you. Take them and your liberty too, and go whithersoever you will." Don Diego was astonished, for he expected anything but this. But Ascanio and his father, too, begged me to pardon him and take him back. When I asked who it was who spoke for him, he told me it was his father; to whom I said, after many entreaties, "Because you are his father, I will take him back for your sake."

xciv. Now I had made up my mind, as I said a little time ago, to set out for France. For I saw that the Pope had not so great a conceit of me as before evil tongues had fouled the fame of my good service; and I feared lest they who could do this, might do me a worse turn. So I was determined to seek another country and better luck; and I was desirous of setting out without any one's leave, and alone. The evening before my start I told my faithful Felice to make use of my property till I came back, and, if I never returned, everything was to be his. I had a Perugian apprentice who had helped me to finish the Pope's commissions, and him I now paid off. But he begged me to let him come along with me, and said he would pay his own way; also if I should stop to work for the King of France, it would be better for me to have my own Italians about me, and especially such as I knew could be of service to me. He knew how to use such persuasion that I consented to take him with me on the terms he had suggested. Then Ascanio, who was by during this discussion, said to me almost in tears, "When you took me back, I said I should stay with you for life, and I would fain do so." But I told him I would not have him with me for anything in the world. Thereupon the poor lad made his preparations to come after me on foot; and

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seeing his determination, I hired an extra horse for him, put one of my small valises on the crupper, and burdened myself with much more superfluous stuff than I had intended.

Leaving Rome, I travelled on to Florence, from Florence to Bologna, from Bologna to Venice, and from Venice to Padua, where I left my inn for the house of my dear friend, Alessandro del Bene. Next day I went to kiss the hand of Messer Pietro Bembo, who was not yet Cardinal. Messer Pietro gave me as warm a welcome as ever man received. Then, turning to Alessandro, he said, "I want Benvenuto to stay here with all his company, though they be a hundred. So make up your mind, if you want Benvenuto, to be also my guest, for I will not give him up to you." And so I remained, and was well entertained by that most distinguished gentleman. He had prepared a room for me which would have done too much honour to a cardinal, and he would always have me sit at his table. Gradually he began to insinuate, with great modesty, that I might do his portrait. I desired nothing better in the world. So I mixed some clean fine white plaster of Paris in a box, and began. The first day I worked two hours on end, and sketched his fine head with such grace that his lordship was astounded. It must be said that though he was eminent in letters, and in the highest rank of poets, yet of my art he understood nothing at all. So he thought I had finished when I had hardly begun, and I could not make him see that it wanted a great deal of time to do the thing well. However, I made up my mind to do my best and give it all the time it deserved ; but as he wore a short beard, in the Venetian fashion, I had a deal of trouble to model the head so that it satisfied me. Still I did finish it, and I thought I had never done so fine a thing, judged from the point of view of my art. But he was dismayed, for he had thought, as I

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had done the first rough model in two hours, I should cast it in ten ; and now he saw that I had not completed the wax in two hundred hours, and I was asking leave to go off to France. This distressed him greatly ; and he entreated me first to do him a reverse for the medal at least, the design to be a Pegasus within a myrtle wreath. I did it in about three hours, and put my most elegant work into it. He was much pleased, but he said, "This horse seems to me ten times more difficult to do than the little head over which you slaved so long. I do not understand why it was so hard to do." But he kept on begging me to carry it out in steel, saying, "I entreat you as a great favour. You can do it quickly, if you have a mind to." I said I was not willing to do it at the moment ; but in whatever place I stopped to work I should finish it without fail.

Before this discussion was settled, I went to bargain for three horses to take me into France, and Messer Bembo kept a private watch on me, for his word was law in Padua. So when I wished to pay for the horses, having agreed to give fifty ducats for them, the owner said, "Illustrious master, I make you a present of the three horses." To this I answered, "This gift is not from you, and from the giver I will not accept it, for I have not been able to give him any of my work." The good man told me that if I did not take these horses, I should find no others in Padua, and should therefore be obliged to go on foot. Hearing this, I went back to the magnificent Messer Pietro, who pretended to know nothing of the matter. He only heaped kindness upon me, and begged me to stop in Padua. I was unwilling to consent, having fully made up my mind to go ; so I was forced to accept the three horses, and with them I set off on my travels.

xcv. I took the road through the Grisons, for none

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of the others were safe on account of the war, and crossed the Albula and Bernina mountains. It was the 8th of May, but a great deal of snow lay on them still, and it was at the greatest peril of our lives we traversed these two mountain passes. On the other side we stopped at a place which, if I remember rightly, is called Wallenstadt, and here we put up. That night there arrived a Florentine courier called Busbacca. I had heard him spoken of as a man of credit, and capable in his profession, and did not know he had fallen into disrepute by his rascally deeds. When he saw me at the inn, he called me by my name, told me he was going on important business to Lyons, and begged me to be kind enough to lend him money for the journey. I told him I had no money to lend him, but if he liked to come with me, I would pay his way to Lyons. The rascal shed tears and cajoled me very cleverly, saying, "When it is a question of public importance, and a poor courier is in want of money, a man like you is bound to help him." Besides, he said, he was carrying things of the utmost consequence from Messer Filippo Strozzi. Now he had with him a leather case, and he whispered in my ear that in it was a silver beaker containing jewels to the value of many thousand ducats, besides the important letters from Messer Filippo Strozzi. Whereupon I said to him to let me hide the jewels on his person, which would be less dangerous than carrying them in that beaker, which he might hand over to me. It might be worth about ten crowns, I thought ; but I would give him five-and-twenty on it. At this the courier said he would come along with me, since he could not do better. To give up the cup would be to his discredit.

So it was arranged ; and setting off next morning, we came to a lake between Wallenstadt and Wesen. This lake is fifteen miles long, with Wesen at one end of it. When I saw the boats on the water, I was

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frightened, for they were made of pine trunks, not very large, and by no means solid, and neither nailed together nor tarred. And I had never ventured to embark on one, if I had not seen four German gentlemen with their four horses get into just such another. Indeed I would sooner have turned back ; but I thought to myself, seeing their stupid indifference, these German waters do not drown you as do ours in Italy. But my two young lads said to me, "Benvenuto, it is a perilous thing for us to get into this boat with four horses." "Don't you see," I replied, "you cowards, that those four gentlemen have done the like before us, and that they are going off laughing ? If it were wine, I should say it was for the pleasure of boozing ; but since it is water, I know they do not want to be swallowed up in it any more than we do." The lake was fifteen miles long and about three wide. On one side was a very high mountain seamed with cavernous precipices, on the other a green plain. When we had gone about four miles a storm came up, and the rowers asked us to help with the oars. I signed to them to put us out on the farther bank, but they said it was not possible, for there was not water enough, and there were sand-banks which would wreck the boat and drown us all. Then again they begged us to assist them, and each man called to the other for help. Seeing them in this desperate condition, I put the bridle on the neck of my horse, a very clever animal, and took hold of the halter with my left hand. The creature, which had the intelligence of his kind, understood my meaning when I turned its face towards the fresh grass, namely, that he should swim and drag me along with him. Just then so huge a wave came up that our boat was under water. "Have mercy, my father !" called Ascanio ; "help me !" He was just throwing himself upon me, when I put my hand to my dagger, and told them all they were to do as I had

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taught them, for the horses would save their lives, and I hoped to escape, too, by the same means. Then I told Ascanio that if he threw himself upon me again I should kill him. So we went on for several miles through this mortal peril.

xcvi. When we had reached the middle of the lake, we found a bit of flat land where we could rest. And there I saw the four German gentlemen had landed. When we wished to do the same, the boatmen insisted we should do nothing of the kind. So I said to my lads, "Now is the time to show what we are made of. Out with your swords, and force them to land us!" This we did with great difficulty, for they resisted all they could. When we were on land we had to climb for two miles up that mountain, which was harder than scaling a ladder. I was clad in mail, with big boots; I had a gun in my hand, and God was raining down on us all the rain in heaven. Those devils of Germans, leading their little horses by the bridle, did wonders, while our beasts were useless at the thing, and we nearly died of the effort to make them climb the stiff mountain side. When we had got up some way, Ascanio's horse, a capital Hungarian mount, slipped in one of the bad places. Ascanio was a little in front of Busbacca, the courier, and he had given him his lance to carry. The horse went staggering back, unable to keep his feet, so that he fell on the lance which that rascal of a courier was carrying, and who had not the sense to keep it out of the creature's way. It went right through its neck. Another young fellow was coming to his help, but his horse also, a black one, slid down towards the lake. It got a hold for a moment on a bush which, however, was but too yielding. Now the creature was laden with a pair of saddle bags, in which was all my money and everything I had of value. I shouted to the lad to look out for himself and let the horse go to the

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devil. There was a fall of a mile down to where the mountain ran steep into the lake. Just under this place our boatmen were stationed, so that if the horse fell, it would be right on the top of them. I, in front, and the rest behind me, stood waiting the fall, for it seemed as if it were going to certain perdition. But as we stood there, I cried to the lads, "Don't trouble about anything ! Let us save ourselves, and thank God for all ! For me, I am only sorry for that poor Busbacca, who tied his cup and his jewels, to the value of several thousand ducats, to that horse's saddle-bow, thinking it would be safer so. I had but a few hundred crowns, and I fear nothing in the world, so I be in the care of God." Here Busbacca said, "I am not troubling about my loss, but a great deal about yours." So I asked him, "Why are you concerned about my little, and not about all your own property ?" Then Busbacca answered, "In God's name I will tell you, for in such circumstances and straits as ours we must tell the truth. I know that yours are crowns, and real crowns, but my goblet case, in which I said there were all those jewels, is filled with caviare." Hearing this, I could not help laughing, and my young fellows laughed also. But he wept. Meanwhile the horse righted itself when we thought it was all over with it. So, laughing, we pulled ourselves together again, and set forward up the mountain path. The four German gentlemen, who had got to the top of this steep mountain before us, sent back some men to help us, so that we reached the camping-place in the outer wild. We arrived there wet, weary, and dying of hunger ; but we were most kindly received, and we dried ourselves, rested, and satisfied our hunger, while our horse's wounds were dressed with certain herbs. They showed us what kind of herb to use. The hedges were full of it, and they told us that if we kept it continually on the sore, the creature would

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not only get better, but would serve us as if no harm had ever come to it. And we did this. Having thanked the gentlemen, and being much restored, we left the place and continued our journey, thanking God, who had saved us from such great dangers.

xcvii. We reached a place beyond Wesen, where we rested for the night. Here at every hour the whole night through we heard a watchman singing most pleasingly. As all the houses of the town are built of pine wood, the watchman's only words were a warning against fire. Every time the watchman sang, Busbacca, whom the past day's happenings had somewhat unnerved, cried out in his sleep, "Alas, my God, I am drowning!" This was partly due to yesterday's fright, and partly because he had got drunk in the evening; for he would sit drinking with all the Germans there. So sometimes he called out "I am on fire," and sometimes "I am drowning;" and again he thought he was enduring the agonies of hell, with the caviare round his neck.

We spent the evening so agreeably that all our hardships were turned to food for jests. In the morning we rose to a most lovely day, and went to dine at a gay little township called Lachen. There we were splendidly entertained, and afterwards hired guides who were on their way back to the town of Zurich. Our guide walked along a dyke by the side of the lake, for it was the only road; and even the dyke was covered with water, so that the fool slipped, and his horse and he both went under water. I, who was just behind, stopped my horse and waited to see the brute get up. Then, as if nothing had happened, he began singing again, and signed to me to come on. I dashed off to the right, breaking through some hedges, and leading my lads and Busbacca after me. The guide shouted out in German that if the people about were to see me, they would murder me. But we pressed on and escaped that other storm, and

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arrived at Zurich, a marvellous city, which shines like a little jewel. Here we rested a whole day and night, and next morning betimes we were off, and came to another fine city called Solothurn. From this we went on to Lausanne, from Lausanne to Geneva, and from Geneva to Lyons, singing and laughing all the way. At Lyons I rested four days, and enjoyed myself very much with some friends of mine. Here also I was paid for what Busbacca had cost me. Then at the end of the time I took the road to Paris. It was a pleasant journey, save that when we reached La Palice, a band of brigands did their best to murder us, and it was not without some courage on our part that we got out of their hands. Thence we went forward to Paris without the least trouble in the world. Singing and laughing all the way, we reached our goal in safety.

xcviii. Having rested for some time in Paris, I went to seek Rosso, the painter, who was in the service of the King. Now I looked on Rosso as the best friend I had in the world, for in Rome I had shown him the greatest kindness one man can show to another. These acts of kindness can be told in a few words ; and I will not fail to tell them, just to show his brazen-faced ingratitude. When he was in Rome, he had let loose his evil tongue about the works of Raffael of Urbino, so that the pupils of that great man determined to murder him. From this I saved him by guarding him night and day at the greatest trouble to myself. Again, he had slandered Maestro Antonio da San Gallo, a most excellent architect, and who was thus the cause of his losing a commission which he himself had got for Rosso from Messer Agnolo da Cesi. Afterwards Antonio became so set against him that he would have brought him to the point of starvation, if I had not lent him many a little sum of ten crowns to keep him alive. I had not seen a penny of it since, and knowing he was in the

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service of the King, I went, as I have said, to visit him, not so much because I thought of his returning my money, but that I might be helped by his favours into the King's service.

When he saw me he got uneasy at once, and said, "Benvenuto, you have spent too much on such a long journey, especially at a time when everybody's mind is full of war, and nobody has a thought for the trifling things of our profession." I told him I had brought as much money as would take me back again to Rome, in the same way I had now come to Paris; that this was not what I expected to get in exchange for all the trouble I had taken for him, and that now I began to believe what Maestro Antonio da San Gallo had told me about him. He wanted to turn the thing off with a joke, when his villainy was brought home to him; but I showed him a letter of change for five and twenty crowns on Ricciardo del Bene. The rascal then was ashamed, and was for keeping me almost by force. But I laughed at him, and went off in the company of a painter who had been present at the interview. He was one Sguazzella, a Florentine, and I went to lodge in his house, with three horses and three servants, at so much a week. He entertained me very well, and I paid him still better.

Afterwards I sought an audience of the King, and was introduced to him by a certain Messer Giuliano Buonaccorti, his treasurer. But this was after much delay; for though I did not know it, Rosso was working most zealously against my getting word with the King. When Messer Giuliano became aware of this, he took me at once to Fontainebleau, and brought me right into the presence of his Majesty, with whom I had a whole hour of most gracious audience. As he was then preparing to set out for Lyons, he told Messer Giuliano to take me with him, and that by the way we should talk together of

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some fine pieces of work which he was thinking of having carried out. So off I set with the court ; and on the road became very intimate with the Cardinal of Ferrara, who, however, had not then the hat. Every evening I had long talks with him, and his lordship advised me to remain in Lyons, at an abbey of his in that city ; and there I might enjoy my leisure till the King, who was going on to Grenoble, should come back from the war. At this abbey I should have everything put at my disposal.

As soon as we reached Lyons, I fell ill, and my young Ascanio had taken the quartan fever. By that time I was sick of the French and their court, and I longed to be back again in Rome. The Cardinal, seeing me so strongly inclined to return, gave me money to make him a silver basin and ewer. So we set our faces homewards, mounted on excellent horses, and crossed the Simplon, in the company of certain Frenchmen for some part of the way. The quartan fever still hung about Ascanio ; and I had a low fever, which seemed as if it was never going to leave me. My stomach was so disordered, that for four months I don't believe I ate a whole loaf in the week. I was full of longing to go back to Italy ; for there I was fain to die rather than in France.

xcix. When we had crossed the Simplon, we came to a river near a place called Valdivedro. This river was very wide and deep, and across it ran a long narrow bridge without a railing. That morning a thick white frost lay on the ground ; and when I came to the bridge in front of the others, I saw the place was very dangerous for riders, and so I ordered my apprentices and servants to get down and lead their horses by the bridle. Thus I crossed the bridge quite safely. By the way I fell into conversation with one of the Frenchmen, who was of gentle birth. The other, who was a notary, had remained behind,

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and was making fun of the French gentleman and myself, who, he declared, were frightened at nothing at all, since we had been at the pains of crossing on foot. At this I turned, and seeing him in the middle of the bridge, I begged him to come very cautiously, for he was in a very dangerous place. The man, like the true Frenchman that he was, cried out to me in his own tongue, that I was a poor-spirited fellow, and that there was no danger at all. Just as he said this, he pricked his spurs, and his horse slipped over the bridge, and fell, feet uppermost, near a huge rock in the water. But God has oftentimes pity of fools ; and both beasts, rider and horse, plunged into a great deep hole, where they disappeared. As soon as I saw this, I began running with the utmost speed, and with great difficulty climbed on the rock. Dangling myself over it, I caught the skirt of the man's garment, and thus dragged him up from below the water. He had swallowed a great quantity, and in another moment would have been drowned. So seeing him out of danger, I congratulated him on my having saved his life. Whereupon he answered me in French, saying that I had done nothing at all ; that the things worth saving were his documents, which he valued at ever so many crowns ; and angry enough did he seem as he stood there dripping and grumbling and muttering. I turned to the guides, and ordered them to help the beast, promising that they should be paid. One of them set to the task very cleverly ; and with great trouble to himself, fished up the manuscripts so that not one was lost. But the other guide would not take the least trouble in the matter.

We had made up a purse, and I was the bursar : so as soon as we came to the place I have spoken of, and had dined, I gave some coins from the joint-purse to the guide who had helped to drag the man's property from the water. But the notary said that I might pay him with my own money ; for he did not

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mean to give him anything save what we had agreed on for his services. I retorted with vigorous abuse. Then came up the other guide, and demanded also to be paid. And when I said, "He who bears the cross deserves the prize," he answered that soon he would show me a cross which would be a weeping matter for me. And I replied that I would light a candle at that cross ; and perhaps he would carry it, when he went to do penance in a white sheet.

Now the place where we were is on the confines of Venetian and German lands ; and the rascal ran about among the people and brought them back, he at the head of them, with a great boar-spear in his hand. I mounted on my good horse, and lowering my gun, I cried to my company, 'At my first shot he is a dead man ; and you others do your duty ; for these are highwaymen, and they are only making use of this little incident as a pretext to massacre us.' The host of the inn where we had dined called one of the head men, who was an old fellow, and begged him to put an end to the disturbance. 'For,' said he, 'this is a most brave young man, and though you cut him in pieces, yet would he kill a great number of you ; and, indeed, he is more likely to slip through your fingers after doing you a deal of mischief.' So the thing was calmed down, and the old chief said to me, 'Go in peace. You would be all too few for us, even if you had a hundred men with you.' I knew he spoke the truth, and already I had given myself up for dead. But hearing no more insults cast at us, I shook my head, and said, 'I would have done my uttermost to show I am alive and a man.'

Then we went on our way. That evening at the first quarters we came to, we settled our accounts ; and I took willing leave of the beastly French notary, parting on very friendly terms, however, with the other, who was a gentleman. Then, with only my own men and our horses, I came to Ferrara.

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As soon as I had dismounted, I went to the Duke's court to pay my respects to his Excellency, so that I might set out next morning towards Santa Maria da Loreto. I had waited till two hours after sundown, when at last the Duke appeared. I kissed his hands ; he gave me a kind reception, and ordered water to be brought for my hands, as I was to sup with him. But I answered pleasantly, "Most Excellent Signor, it is now more than four months since I have eaten as much as you would think enough to keep body and soul together. Therefore, as I cannot enjoy the royal fare at your table, I shall remain and talk with you while your Excellency sups ; and thus we shall have more pleasure than if I supped with you." So we fell to talking, and at that we spent three hours ; after which I took my leave. On returning to my inn, I found splendid entertainment ready ; for the Duke had sent me food from his own table, with plenty of good wine. And as it was more than two hours beyond my supper hour, I ate with the greatest appetite ; and it was the first time for more than four months I had been able to do so.

c. Setting off in the morning, I went to Santa Maria da Loreto. Then, having said my prayers, I made my way on to Rome, where I found my dear faithful Felice. I left him the shop with all the furniture and other belongings, and opened another, much larger and more spacious, next door to Sugherello the perfumer. I felt sure the great King Francis would have no more remembrance of me ; so I undertook many commissions for various noblemen, and at the same time I worked at the jug and basin which I had in hand for the Cardinal of Ferrara. I employed a great many workmen, and did a good business in gold and silver plate. Now I had bargained with my Perugian workman that he should write down all the moneys spent on his account, for clothes and various other things. With the expenses of the

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journey, it came to about seventy crowns. We had agreed that he should pay three crowns a month ; for he earned more than eight with me. At the end of two months the rascal ran off from my shop, leaving me burdened with business, and said that he would not pay me any more. So I was advised to get my rights by the way of the law. Now I had had it in my mind to chop off one of his arms ; and assuredly I should have done it ; but my friends thought it was not wise for me to do such a thing, seeing that I should lose my money, and perhaps Rome, too, once more ; for blows are not dealt by rule. Besides, they said, by means of the written agreement I had in his hand, I could soon have him imprisoned. So I gave heed to their advice—though I should have liked to have treated the business with a freer hand. When the case actually came on before the auditor of the Camera, I won it ; and as a result of the judgment, which, however, was not given for several months, I had him put in prison. Meanwhile I was overburdened in the shop with my big orders, amongst others all the gold ornaments and jewels belonging to the wife of Signor Gierolimo Orsino, father of Signor Paolo, and son-in-law of our Duke Cosimo. When these things were nearly completed, other very important ones rained in. I had eight workmen, and I worked alongside them day and night, for honour and for profit.

ci. While I was thus conducting my business, a letter reached me, sent post haste from the Cardinal of Ferrara, which was to this effect :—

“ Benvenuto, our dear friend, in these past days the great and most Christian King remembered you, and said he would fain have you in his service. To this I answered, that you had given me your promise that any time I sent for you on the King’s service you would come at once. Thereupon his Majesty said, ‘ I desire that

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he should be provided with money to travel in a way befitting a man of his distinction.' And on the spot he ordered his Admiral to advance me a thousand golden crowns out of the royal Treasury. The Cardinal de' Gaddi, who was present during the conversation, at once stepped forward, and said to his Majesty that he need give no such order, for he had sent you money enough, and that you were indeed upon the road. Now if by chance the truth, as I believe, be just the contrary of what the Cardinal de' Gaddi told us, reply at once on receipt of my letter. Then I will pick up the thread of this business, and will see that you have the money promised you by this generous King."

Now let the world and every living man therein bear witness how evil stars and adverse fortune work against us mortals ! Not twice in all my life had I spoken to that wretched little imbecile of a Cardinal de' Gaddi ; and yet this arrogance of his was not meant to do me any harm in the world ; it was merely a piece of feather-brained conceit on his part, meant to show how he, too, had an eye on the affairs of the artists whom the King desired to have in his service, just as much as the Cardinal of Ferrara. But he was foolish enough not to say anything to me about it ; else certainly, so as to shield a silly puppet from blame—who was, after all, my countryman—I should have found some excuse to cover his blundering arrogance.

As soon as I received the letter of the most reverend Cardinal of Ferrara, I answered that, for the Cardinal de' Gaddi, I knew nothing about him at all ; that, indeed, if he had suggested such a thing, I should not have moved from Italy without the knowledge of his most reverend lordship, especially as in Rome I had a larger business than ever before. But, I added, at a sign from his most Christian Majesty, handed on by so high a personage as the Cardinal of

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Ferrara, I should leave at once, throwing everything else to the winds. When I had sent my letter, that faithless workman of mine bethought himself of an evil trick, which had an immediate success owing to the avarice of Pope Paul Farnese, though it owed still more to his bastard son, then called the Duke of Castro. This man told one of Signor Pier Luigi's secretaries that he had been in my service for several years, and assured him that he knew all about my affairs. So he swore I was worth more than eighty thousand ducats, the greater part of which was in jewels ; that these jewels were the property of the Church ; and that I had stolen them in the Castle of St. Angelo during the sack of Rome. They should see, said he, about having me caught at once before I got wind of their intention.

One morning I had been working more than three hours before dawn on those things for the bride I have spoken of. While my servants were opening my shop and cleaning it, I put on my cloak and went to take a little walk. Going along the Strada Giulia, I came out at the Chiavica corner ; and there Crespino the Bargello, with all his men, came upon me. "You are the Pope's prisoner," said he ; to which I replied, "Crespino, you take me for some one else." "No," said Crespino, "you are Benvenuto the artist. I know you quite well, and I have to take you to the Castle of St. Angelo ; for that's the place where lords and distinguished men like you are sent." Thereupon four of his corporals threw themselves on me, and would have taken my dagger from me by force, and some rings I wore on my finger ; but Crespino cried out, "Not one of you touch him ! Only do your duty, and see he does not escape." Then approaching me, in courteous terms he asked for my weapons. While I was giving them up, the thought came over me that just in this place I had killed Pompeo. Thence they took me

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to the castle, and locked me into the top chamber in the donjon. This was the first time I ever had a taste of prison, and I was then thirty-seven years old.

cii. The Pope's son, Signor Pier Luigi, having brooded over the great quantity of money which I was accused of stealing, asked his father, as a favour, to give it to him when it should have been recovered. The Pope conceded this willingly ; and, moreover, promised to help him to recover it. So I was kept in prison eight whole days ; and at the end of that time, to bring the thing to an issue, they sent me to be questioned. For this purpose, I was called into a hall of the Pope's castle, a place destined for great ceremonies. One of the examiners was the Governor of Rome, who was called Messer Benedetto Conversini, a Pistojan, afterwards Bishop of Jesi ; another was the Procurator-fiscal, whose name I don't remember ; and the third was the Judge of the Criminal Court, Messer Benedetto da Cagli. First, these three men began their examination mildly ; but their language grew most harsh and threatening after I had said to them, " My lords, for the last half-hour you have been doing nothing but question me about cock-and-bull stories and such-like nonsense ; so that in truth your talk might not unjustly be called chatter or babble. For chattering is talking nonsense, isn't it ? And babbling is uttering empty words. Therefore I entreat you to tell me what you want of me, that I may hear reasonable words from your mouths, and not idle fables and rubbish of that kind." At this the Governor, who was a Pistojan, no longer able to hold in his violent temper, broke out, " You speak very confidently ; indeed, much too haughtily ; but I will make that haughtiness of yours cringe lower than a shivering puppy, when you hear what I have to say—which will neither be chattering nor babbling, as you call it,

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but an ordered argument, to the consideration and the answering of which it will behove you to give your whole mind." And then he began :

"We know for a certainty that you were in Rome during the sack of this unhappy city ; and at that time you were in the Castle of St. Angelo, and were employed as bombardier. And since your profession is that of goldsmith and jeweller, Pope Clement, because he had known you before, and because there were no others of your trade in the place, called you to a secret audience, and bade you take out all the jewels of his tiaras, mitres, and rings from their settings. Then, as he had confidence in you, he also ordered you to sew them into his garments. While about this business, unknown to his Holiness, you made away with property to the value of eighty thousand crowns. This has been reported to us by a workman of yours, to whom you confided it, boasting of the same. Now we say to you frankly : find the jewels, or the value of them. After that you may go free."

ciii. When I heard these words I could not help breaking out into an explosion of laughter, which lasted for some little time. "I thank God heartily," I said, "that this first time it has pleased His High Majesty to imprison me, by good fortune I am not confined for some little trifle, as generally happens to young men. Even if what you say were true, there is no danger at all of my being punished in my person ; for at the time you speak of, the law did not run. Or, if the facts were as you declare, I might excuse myself by saying that, in my capacity of dutiful servant, I had guarded this treasure for the sacred, holy Apostolic Church, waiting till I could give it back to a good pope, or, indeed, to whoever should request its return, as, for instance, you." Here that ferocious Pistojan refused to listen to another word, but broke in furiously, "Put what

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meaning on your villainy you please, Benvenuto ; enough for us to have found our own. And now out with it, if you don't want something else from us besides words." As they were getting up to go away, I said, "I have not yet been fully examined. Finish that, and then go whenever you please." So they sat down again, much enraged, and in a humour to listen to nothing I should say. Yet much of their anxiety was gone ; for they thought, perhaps, they had found out all they wished to know. So I began to speak to them after this fashion : " You must know, my lords, that I have lived in Rome nearly twenty years, and have never been imprisoned, neither here nor elsewhere." At this the jack-in-office governor called out, " Yet you have murdered men of our city." To which I answered, " You say so. I make no such admission ; for if a man was to try to kill you, priest though you are, you would defend yourself ; and having killed him, the holy laws would hold you innocent. So let me say what I have to say, if you would refer the matter to the Pope, and judge me aright. I tell you once more, that for nearly twenty years I have been living in this marvellous city of Rome, and here I have carried out most important work in my profession. I know that this is the seat of Christ, and I had sure confidence that, if ever a temporal prince were to wrong me, I should have recourse to this holy chair and the Vicar of Christ, and he would defend my rights. Alas ! what refuge have I now ? And who is the prince who will defend me from such infamous wrong ? Before arresting me, should you not have found out how I disposed of those eighty thousand ducats ? Also, should you not have looked at the record of the jewels which the Apostolic Camera has carefully kept for five hundred years to this day ? If you had found a gap in it, then you should have seized all my books as well as myself. I assure you

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that the books in which are recorded all the jewels of the Pope and the regalia are quite in order, and there is not a single gem belonging to Pope Clement which has not been carefully entered. Only one thing I can think of which might give colour to your proceedings. When Pope Clement was making terms with those Imperial thieves, who had pillaged Rome and outraged the Church, a man came to negotiate the terms of peace, whose name, if I rightly remember, was Cesare Iscatinaro. When he had almost concluded the treaty, the poor Pope, in desperation, and desiring to show him a little kindness, let fall from his finger a diamond ring worth about four thousand crowns. Iscatinaro stooped to pick it up, and the Pope bade him keep it for his sake. I was present at the time ; and if the diamond be missing, I am now telling you where it has gone ; but I have a sure conviction that this also will be found recorded. Therefore, you should be ashamed to persecute a man like me, who have served this apostolic seat so honourably. Do you not know, that had it not been for me, when the Imperial troops entered the Borgo, they would have made their way into the castle without the least hindrance ? But I, who never got anything for my valorous conduct, betook myself vigorously to the guns, which the bombardiers and soldiers had abandoned ; and put heart into a comrade of mine, Raffaello da Montelupo, the sculptor, who had also given up, and was hiding frightened and useless in a corner. I shook life into him ; and he and I by ourselves slew so many of the enemy that the soldiers went by another way. It was I who gave Iscatinaro a taste of my powder, when I saw him speaking with Pope Clement without doing reverence, displaying, indeed, the most boorish insolence, like the Lutheran and infidel he was. Pope Clement, hearing of the affair, had the castle searched to find

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who had fired the shot, meaning to hang him. Then it was I who wounded the Prince of Orange, hitting him on the head below here in the trenches of the castle. Then think of all I have done for Holy Church ; consider the great number of ornaments of silver and gold and jewels I have made, and all the beautiful coins, too, which have received such praise. And priests like you dare give this reward to a man who has served you with such skill, and loved with such good faith ! Now go and tell all I have said to the Pope : that, as to his jewels, he has them all ; that I never had anything from the Church save the wounds from the enemy's guns during the sack ; and that I never counted on anything, save some small recompense from Pope Paul, which he had promised me. Now am I clear in my mind about his Holiness, and about you, his ministers."

While I was speaking these words, they remained listening in astonishment. They looked in each other's faces, and then in much wonderment they left me. All three went away together to report to the Pope what I had said. Somewhat ashamed, his Holiness ordered all the records of the jewels to be examined with the utmost care. But after it was seen that nothing was missing, they left me still in the castle without saying anything more. And Signor Pier Luigi, too, had a bad conscience. Therefore they sought to compass my death.

civ. While these agitated days were passing, King Francis heard all about the Pope's keeping me in prison so unjustly. He had sent as ambassador to Rome one of his gentlemen called Monseigneur de Montluc. Now he wrote to him to ask me from the Pope as one of his Majesty's men. The Pope was a very able and accomplished man, but in this affair of mine he behaved like a poor weak fool ; and he now replied to the King's messenger that his

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Majesty should not trouble about me, for I was a very quarrelsome fellow. He warned him to let me alone ; for he was keeping me in prison for homicide and other devilries I had committed. Again the King wrote, that in his kingdom strict justice reigned ; and as he rewarded distinguished men, heaping on them extraordinary favours, so, on the other hand, did he punish disturbers of the peace. Likewise, his Holiness had once let Benvenuto go away, not caring for his service ; and when he (King Francis) found him in his kingdom, he had gladly taken him into his employment. Now he asked for him as his man. These words brought only endless vexation and harm to me, although no higher compliment could have been paid to a man of my condition. But the Pope got into such a fury, fearing lest I should go and disclose his villainous treatment of me, that he kept thinking of all the possible ways whereby he could bring about my death, without injuring his own repute. The keeper of the Castle of St. Angelo was one of our Florentines, Messer Giorgio, a knight, and one of the Ugolini. This worthy man showed me the greatest courtesy possible, leaving me free to wander about the castle on parole. He was very sensible of the great wrong that was being done to me ; and when I wished to give security for this freedom, he said he could not accept it. The Pope was exaggerating this affair of mine, he declared ; but he would fully trust my word, for he heard from every one that I was an honest man. I gave him my word of honour, and he allowed me the means of working a little at my own craft. Meanwhile, thinking that the Pope's anger must blow over, having regard to my innocence, and also to the favour of the King, I kept my shop open, and Ascanio, my apprentice, came to the castle and brought me things to work at. And though I could work but little—hindered as I was by the

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thought of being thus unjustly shut up—still I made a virtue of necessity, and, as cheerfully as I could, bore with my perverse fortune. I had made friends with all the guards and many of the soldiers of the castle. Now the Pope used sometimes to come to sup within the walls ; and at such times there were no guards at the doors, which stood open like those of an ordinary palace. For that reason, while his Holiness was within, the prisoners used to be locked up with the greatest care. But nothing of the kind was done to me, and I used freely to walk about the castle. Often some of the soldiers would advise me to escape, promising to help me, for they knew the great wrong done to me. To such suggestions I always replied that I had given my word to the castellan, who was a very good fellow, and had shown me great kindness. One of them, a very brave and intelligent man, would then say to me, “ Benvenuto my friend, you must know that a man in prison is not obliged, nor can be obliged, to keep faith or anything else. Do as I tell you ; flee from this scoundrel of a Pope and his bastard son, who will come at your life by some means or another.” But I was determined rather to lose my life than break my word to the honest castellan. So I put up with this indescribable annoyance. The companion of my misfortune was, I should say, a friar of the Pallavicini house, who was a very great preacher.

cv. This man had been seized as a Lutheran. He was an excellent comrade ; but regarded as a friar, the greatest rascal in the world, one who indulged in all kinds of vices. I admired his fine talents, but greatly abhorred his ugly vices, and frankly reproved him for them. He was always telling me I was not obliged to keep faith with the castellan, since I was in prison. I answered him that as a friar he spoke the truth, but not as a man ; and that whoever was a man, and no friar, had to keep faith in whatever circumstances

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he might find himself. So I, who was a man and no friar, would never be false to my bare word given in honour. Finding he could not corrupt me by his shrewd and sophisticated arguments, and his wonderful art in stating them, he thought to tempt me by other means. So he let several days pass, during which he read to me the sermons of Girolamo Savonarola, his admirable commentary on these being finer than the sermons themselves. I was so fascinated by this, that there was nothing in the world I would not have done for him, save break my word, as I have said. When he saw my great admiration for his talents, he thought of another way. Insinuatingly he began to ask me, what would have been my method of opening my doors and escaping, in the case of their having locked me up, and always supposing, of course, I had been willing for the attempt. So wishing to show this clever friar that I, too, was rather keen-witted, I told him I could easily open the most difficult lock, and more especially those of this prison. It would be no harder than eating a bit of fresh cheese. Then, to force my secret out of me, he threw doubt on this, saying, "Men who have the name of being clever make many a boast, which if they had to prove, would lose them credit, and be much to their disadvantage." And he had heard me say things so far from the truth, he went on, that if I were tested, he thought I should come badly out of the affair. Then, stung by this devil of a friar, I told him that my habit was to promise less in words than what I could actually perform ; and for this matter of the keys I had spoken of, it was the easiest thing in the world ; and in a few words I could make him see perfectly that it was as I said. Then, thoughtlessly, I proved with what ease all I had told him could be carried into effect. The friar pretended to pay no attention, but he soon learnt all with perfect

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intelligence. As I have already said, the honest castellan let me wander through all the castle, not even locking me up during the night, as was done with the others. Also he let me work in gold, or silver, or wax, at whatever I wished. Thus for several weeks I employed myself on a basin I was making for the Cardinal of Ferrara. But I grew so weary of my prison that this began to be burdensome ; and so after that, as it was less trouble, I took to modelling little figures in wax. The friar stole a piece of this wax from me ; and with it he set about having the keys made according to the method I had thoughtlessly taught him. As an accomplice in this he had taken a notary of the castellan's household, a Paduan called Luigi. But the friar ordered the keys to be made by a locksmith, who told all. Now the castellan came sometimes to see me in my room, and when he saw me working with wax, he recognised it as the same, and said, "Though this poor Benvenuto has been most deeply wronged, he should not have done such a thing to me, for I have shown him more kindness than my duty allowed me. Now I shall keep him most strictly locked up, and shall never do him kindness any more." So he had me shut up with the utmost severity ; but the worst I had to endure were the words thrown at me by some of his affectionate servants. Before they had been very much attached to me, but now they cast up all the kind deeds done me by their master, and, indeed, called me an ungrateful, light-minded, and faithless fellow. Now one of these servants launched this abuse at me with more boldness than was seemly ; and assured as I was of my innocence, I answered with heat that I had never broken my word, and this I should maintain with my life's blood ; and if he or any one else ever did me such injustice again, I should fling the lie back in his throat. Beside himself at this reprimand, he ran to

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the castellan's apartment, and brought me the wax and the model of the key. As soon as I saw the wax, I told him that both of us were right, but he was to bring me to speech with the lord castellan, and I should tell him frankly how the case stood ; for the matter was of much greater importance than they thought. The castellan sent for me at once, and I told him the whole story. So he seized the friar, who informed against his accomplice, and the notary was nearly being hanged. The castellan tried to hush up the thing, but already it had come to the ears of the Pope. The notary escaped the gallows ; and I was given the same liberty as at the beginning.

cvi. When I saw with what vigour they followed the thing up, I began to think of my own interests, and said, "If a hurricane like this should arise another time, and if this man again distrusted me, I should no longer think myself under any obligation, but should set my wits a-working ; for I am certain I could succeed better than that rascal of a friar." Then I ordered new coarse sheets to be brought me from outside ; and I did not send away the soiled ones. When my servants asked me for them, I told them to be quiet about it, for I had given them to some needy soldiers ; but that if the thing were known, the poor fellows ran the risk of the galleys. So my young apprentices and servants—but especially Felice—kept the affair of the sheets absolutely secret. Then I set about emptying a straw mattress, burning the straw, which, luckily, I could do, for in my prison was a chimney, and I could light a fire. The sheets I tore into strips, the third of a cubit in width. When I had torn up enough, as I thought, to enable me to descend from the high keep of the Castle of St. Angelo, I said to my servants that I had given away all I wished ; that now they must bring me finer sheets, and I should always return

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to them the soiled ones. This thing was soon forgotten.

Now Cardinals Santiquattro and Cornaro forced my servants to shut up the shop. They told me frankly that the Pope would not hear a word of my release, and that the great favours of the King had done me more harm than good. The last message that Monsignor de Montluc sent to his Holiness on the part of the King, had been to the effect that I should be handed over to the ordinary judges of the court. Then, if I had sinned, he could punish me ; but if I had not, justice demanded that he should let me go free. These words had so annoyed the Pope that it was in his mind not to release me any more. But the castellan most certainly helped me all he could. Now when my enemies saw my shop shut up, they used to sneer at and insult such servants and friends of mine as came to visit me in prison. It happened one day that Ascanio, who came twice every day to see me, asked me to have a little coat made for him out of a blue satin vest of mine, which I never wore. I had only used it the day I walked in procession. But I told him this was not a time, nor was I in a place, to wear such garments. The boy was so offended I did not give him this miserable little vest, that he said he wanted to go away home to Tagliacozzo. In a great rage, I retorted that I should be much pleased to be rid of him ; and he swore with the greatest heat never to come back any more. During our altercation we were walking round the donjon of the castle. It happened that the castellan was also taking a walk, and just as we came up against his lordship, Ascanio was saying, "I go then, and adieu for evermore !" To which I answered, "For ever is the word—so let it be ! I shall tell the guards never to let you pass again." Then turning to the castellan, I begged him most earnestly to order the guards never to let Ascanio

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come through any more. "For," I said, "this little rustic only comes to fill up my cup of sorrow to overflowing. So I entreat you, my lord, let him never enter more." The castellan was much distressed, for he knew the boy to be wonderfully talented, and, besides, he was of so fair a shape that no one could see him without falling deeply in love with him. The lad went away weeping. He was carrying, I must tell you, a little scimitar, which sometimes he wore secretly under his garments. When he left the castle, his face all tear-stained, he met with two of my worst enemies. One of them was Jeronimo the Perugian, and the other was called Michele; and they were both goldsmiths. Michele, who was a friend of that rascally Perugian, and none to Ascanio, said, "What is the meaning of Ascanio weeping? Perhaps his father is dead. I mean that father of his in the castle." Whereupon the boy replied, "He is alive, but you're a dead man!" and lifting his hand, he struck twice at the man's head with his scimitar. At the first blow he knocked him down; with the second he cut off three fingers of his right hand, though he had aimed at his head; and the fellow lay there for dead. The affair was reported at once to the Pope, who cried in great wrath, "Since the King wishes Benvenuto to be judged, go and tell him he has three days to prepare his case." They made haste to fulfil his order; whereupon that worthy man the castellan went off at once to his Holiness, and made it clear to him that I was not cognisant of the thing, that, in fact, I had just chased the boy away. So admirably did he defend me that he saved my life in the great storm that raged about me. Ascanio fled home to Tagliacozzo; and from there he wrote asking my pardon a thousand times, saying he knew he had been wrong to add to my vexations and my great trouble. But, he went on, if by God's grace I got

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out of prison, he would never leave me any more. I sent him word that he was to go on learning his trade ; and I promised, if God ever gave me my liberty, I should certainly call him back to me.

cvi. The castellan was every year the victim of a certain infirmity which bereft him of his wits. When it was coming on, he would speak, or rather he would chatter without stopping. These humours of his varied every year. One time he thought he was an oil jar ; another time a frog, and then he jumped just like one. Again he thought he was dead, and he had to be buried. Thus each year he had a different delusion. Now this time he began to imagine that he was a bat ; and when he went for a walk, he would every now and then give a low scream as bats do, and flutter his hands and his body as if he were going to fly. When his doctors and his old servants saw the malady upon him, they indulged him in every possible way ; and since it seemed to them he took great pleasure in hearing me talk, they were always fetching me to keep him company. And the poor man sometimes kept me four or five hours talking to him the whole time. He had me sit opposite him at table, and he never stopped talking and making me talk. In spite of all this conversation I ate well ; but he, poor man, neither ate nor slept. Now all this tired me out, so that I was at the end of my forces. And sometimes when I looked at him, his eyes were terrible to see, one turning one way and one the other. One day he asked me if I had ever had a fancy to fly. I answered that I had always been most eager to do, and had done, such things as come hardest to men ; and as for flying, the God of Nature had given me a body more than usually agile and fit for running and leaping ; and so by the aid of what little wits I possessed, I could manage some kind of mechanical contrivance ; and certainly I did not want courage

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for the attempt. Then he began to ask me what methods I should use ; to which I answered, that if we observed the flying creatures, the one whose natural powers could best be imitated by art was the bat. When the poor man heard that name of bat, the mimicry of which was the form his mania took that year, he cried with a loud voice, saying, " He speaks the truth, he speaks the truth ! That's the thing—the very thing !" Then turning to me, he said, " Benvenuto, if you had the chance, would you have the courage to fly ? " Thereupon I said that, if he would give me my liberty, I had pluck enough to fly as far as Prati, and would make myself a pair of wings out of waxed linen for the purpose. Then he answered, " And I, too, should not be behindhand ; but the Pope has commanded me to look after you as the apple of his eye ; and I know you are a clever enough devil to make your escape. Therefore I am going to lock you up with a hundred keys, so that you don't make off." I entreated him, reminding him how I had had opportunities of escape, but that, for the sake of the word I had given him, I had never broken faith. Then I begged him, for the love of God, not to add a greater misery to what I was now suffering. But even while I was speaking, he gave strict orders for me to be bound and taken to my prison, and there securely locked up. Seeing there was no help for it, I said to him, in the presence of his household, " Make fast your locks and watch me well, for I shall get out of here one way or another." Then they led me off, and shut me up with the greatest care.

cviii. From that moment I set to thinking about the best means of escape. As soon as they had shut the door on me, I went about examining the prison where I lay. When I believed I had certainly found a way of getting out, I began to devise a

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means of climbing down from the high castle keep. Then I took those new sheets of mine, which, as I have already said, I had torn into strips and well sewn together, and calculated what length would serve me to climb down by. When I had made up my mind about this, and prepared everything, I laid my hands on a pair of pincers, which I had stolen from a Savoyard warder of the castle. This man looked after the barrels and the cisterns ; and he also worked at carpentering for his pleasure. Now he had several pincers, and amongst them some huge solid ones. Just my affair, I thought ; and I stole them, and hid them in the mattress. Then the time came for me to use the tool, and I began to try the nails of the hinges. As the door was a double one, the riveting of the nails could not be seen, so that when I tried to draw one out, it gave me the greatest trouble ; but in the end I succeeded. When I had drawn out the first nail, I bethought me how I should contrive that this should not be seen. I managed it by mixing some little rusty iron filings with a little wax, getting just the very colour of those long nails I had taken out. With this I began carefully imitating the nails in the supports of the hinges ; and by degrees made a waxen counterfeit for every one I drew out. I left the hinges still attached at top and bottom with some of the old nails, which, however, I only put back after they had been cut, and then only lightly, so that they just held the hinge-plates and no more. This business gave me a deal of trouble ; for the castellan dreamt each night that I had escaped, and every now and then he sent to have my prison examined. The man who came to investigate had a bum-bailiff's name, Bozza, and behaved as such. He always brought with him another fellow called Giovanni, surnamed Pedignone. He was a soldier, and Bozza was a menial. This Giovanni never once came to

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my prison without insulting me. He was from Prato, where he had been an apothecary. Every evening he examined the hinges and the whole prison very carefully; and I would say to him, "Keep a good look-out on me, for I am going to slip through your hands for a certainty." These words stirred up a furious hatred between him and me. So with the utmost care I hid up my implements, that is, the pincers, a large dagger, and other things pertaining to my plan, in my mattress, along with the strips I had made. As soon as daylight came I used to sweep my room; and though by nature I like cleanliness, I kept my place in specially good order then. When I had done my sweeping, I arranged my bed beautifully, and laid flowers on it, which I had a certain Savoyard bring me almost every morning. This was the Savoyard who had charge of the cisterns and barrels, and who worked at carpentering for his pleasure. It was from him I stole the pincers with which I picked out the nails from the hinge-plates.

cix. Now to return to what I was saying about my bed. When Bozza and Pedignone came in, I told them they were to keep at a due distance from it, that they might not foul and spoil it. When sometimes, just to annoy me, they would touch it lightly, I would cry to them, "Oh, you dirty cowards! I'll get hold of those swords of yours, and serve you a turn that will astonish you! Do you think yourselves good enough to touch the bed of a man of my sort? No care for my own life shall hold me back, for I am sure to take yours. So leave me alone with my troubles and my tribulations, and don't add to them; otherwise, I'll let you see what a desperate man can do." All this they told to the castellan. But he expressly ordered them not to go near my bed, and to come to me without their swords; for the rest, they were to keep a sharp look-out on me.

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When I was thus sure about the bed, I thought I had done everything, for therein lay what I needed most for the business. One feast night, when the castellan was feeling very ill, and his humours were at their height, he kept on saying that he was a bat ; and if they heard that Benvenuto had flown away, they were to let him go, for he would overtake me, since at night-time he could certainly fly better than I. "Benvenuto," said he, "is only a sham bat, but I'm a real one. And since he's been given into my keeping, leave the business to me, for I'll come up with him." He had been in this condition for several nights, and had tired out all his servants. And I heard about it through different channels, but especially from the Savoyard, who was a friend of mine. This feast-day evening I had made up my mind to escape at all hazards. First I prayed most devoutly to God, entreating His Divine Majesty to defend me, and aid me in my perilous enterprise. Then I prepared everything I needed for the business, working all through that night. When day was but two hours off, I removed the hinges with the greatest trouble. But the wooden frame and the bolt also resisted, so that I could not open the door, and had, therefore, to cut the wood. At last I succeeded ; and then carrying the strips of linen, which I had rolled round two pieces of wood like flax on a spindle, I made my way out towards the privies of the keep. From inside I perceived two tiles on the roof, and thus I could climb up at once with the greatest ease. I was wearing at the time a white jerkin, white hosen, and a pair of buskins, into which I thrust my dagger. Taking one end of my linen rope, I tied it in the form of a stirrup round a piece of antique tile which was built into the wall, and which stuck out hardly the length of four fingers. This done, I turned my face to God, and said, "O Lord my God, defend my cause ! for Thou knowest it is

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good ; and that I help myself." Then I let myself go gently, and supporting myself by the strength of my arms, I reached the bottom. The moon was not shining, but the sky was fair and clear. When my feet were on the ground, I regarded the great descent I had made so bravely, and went off much heartened, for I thought I was free. But it was not so ; for on that side the castellan had had two very high walls built enclosing a poultry-run. This place was barred with great bolts on the other side. When I saw my way thus stopped, I was much vexed ; but while walking to and fro, thinking what I should best do, I fell up against a large beam which had been covered up with straw. With great difficulty I set it up against the wall. Then by force of arm I climbed up on it to the top. But as the wall was pointed, I was not solidly enough placed there to draw the pole up after me. So I determined to use a piece of the second rope of linen, as the other I had left hanging from the keep. Well, binding it fast to the beam, I climbed down by it on the other side. This was very far from easy. I was quite worn out at the end ; and, besides, I had galled the palms of my hands, so that they bled. I therefore stayed to rest a while, and bathed my hands in my own urine. When I felt sufficiently recovered, I made my way to the last wall, which looks towards Prati. There I laid down my linen rope, intending to fix it to a battlement, and get down from the lesser height as I had done from the greater. But just at that moment I discovered that behind me was one of the sentinels on duty. Seeing here a hindrance to my plans, and knowing my life in danger, I made up my mind boldly to face the guard, who, perceiving my resolute demeanour, and that I was coming towards him with a weapon in my hand, quickened his step, and made as if to keep out of my way. I had left my ropes some way off ; now I quickly turned back for them,

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and though I saw another sentinel, yet he appeared unwilling to see me. When I had picked up my linen ropes, I tied them to the battlement, and let myself go. But either I thought that I had almost reached the ground, while I was still some distance off, and let go my hands and jumped ; or else my hands were too feeble to keep up the effort. At all events I fell, and in falling, I struck the back of my head, and lay there unconscious more than an hour and a half, so far as I could judge. The day was about to break, and the fresh, cool air that comes before the rising of the sun brought me to my senses ; but yet my wits were not quite clear, for I thought my head was cut off, and that I was in purgatory. Little by little my powers came back to me, and I saw that I was outside the castle, and had a sudden remembrance of all I had done. Now I felt the hurt to my head before I perceived that my leg was broken ; for putting up my hands, I found them all covered with blood. But examining the place thoroughly, I came to the conclusion that the wound was not serious. When, however, I wanted to get up from the ground, I found my right leg broken three inches above the knee. But even this did not discourage me. I drew out my dagger in its sheath, at the end of which was a large ball. This it was which had broken my leg ; for the bone had been jammed against the ball, and unable to bend, had snapped just there. So I threw away the sheath ; and with the dagger I cut off a piece of the remainder of the linen strip, and as well as I could bound up my leg. Then, my weapon in my hand, I crept on all fours towards the gate. I reached it only to find it shut ; but I saw a stone just under the door, and as I thought it was probably not stuck very fast, I tried to move it. Putting my hands to it, I felt it move ; it yielded at once, and I drew it out. Then I crawled through the hole it had stopped up.

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cx. There had been more than five hundred paces from the place where I fell, to the gate by which I entered the city. When I got inside Rome, some mastiffs threw themselves on me and bit me viciously. They set on me several times and worried me, till at last I drew my dagger and dealt one of them such a blow that he yelped loudly. Then the other dogs, as their habit is, gathered about him, while I made haste, on hands and knees, towards the church of the Tras-pontina. When I reached the mouth of the street which turns towards Sant' Agnolo, I took the road to St. Peter's ; for day was breaking above me, and I knew I was in danger. So meeting a water-carrier with his ass laden with full pitchers, I called him to me, and begged him to lift me up and carry me to the terrace by St. Peter's steps ; explaining that I was a poor young man who, in getting down from the window of my lady, had fallen and broken my leg. The house I came out of was of great importance, I told him, and I was in danger of being cut in pieces. So I begged him to carry me off quickly, promising him a golden crown for his pains. And at the word I gave him a sight of my purse, which was by no means empty. He took hold of me at once, hoisted me on his back with a good will, and carried me to the open space above the steps of St. Peter's. There he put me down, and I told him to run back to his ass. At once I took the road again, crawling on all fours towards the house of the Duchess, the wife of Duke Ottavio. She was the natural daughter of the Emperor, and had been the wife of Duke Alessandro of Florence. Now I knew that with this great princess I should find many of my friends, who had come with her from Florence. Besides, I was in her favour, for the castellan had spoken well of me in her presence. Wishing to help me, he had said to the Pope one day, that when the Duchess made her entry into Rome, I had saved them more than a

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thousand crowns. The heavy rain had threatened great damage to the city ; and he had been in despair. But I had put heart into him ; for, as he told, I had pointed several heavy pieces of artillery towards that part of the sky where the clouds were thickest, and from whence torrents of water had already begun to pour. When the artillery was discharged, the rain stopped, and at the fourth round the sun came out. Thus, said he, I had been the sole cause of the festa passing off so happily. When the Duchess heard it, she said, " This Benvenuto is one of the artists who were in the good graces of my husband, Duke Alessandro ; and I shall always keep them in mind when an opportunity comes to do them a good turn." She had also spoken of me to her present husband, Duke Ottavio.

So now I made straight for the house of her Excellency, a very fine palace in Borgo Vecchio. And there I should have been quite safe, and the Pope could not have touched me. But as the thing I had done was beyond the powers of an ordinary human creature, God wished to check my vainglory through a still harder discipline than I had known in the past. And this was how it came about. While I was creeping on all fours up the steps, a servant of Cardinal Cornaro's household recognised me. Now, as it happened, the Cardinal was lodging in the palace, and the servant ran to his master's room, and waking him, said, " Most reverend monsignor, your Benvenuto is below. He has escaped from the castle, and is crawling along on hands and knees, and covered with blood. It looks as if he had broken his leg, and we do not know where he is going." The Cardinal said at once, " Run and carry him into my room here." When I was brought to him, he told me to have no fear. Then he sent at once for the best doctors in Rome, and by them I was treated. One of them was Maestro Jacomo of Perugia, a most

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excellent surgeon. He set my leg very skilfully, then bandaged it, and with his own hand bled me. My veins were unusually swollen, and, besides, he wished to make a rather large incision ; so the blood sputtered furiously out in his face, and bespattered him so abundantly that he had to stop his operations. This he took to be a very bad augury ; and it was with great reluctance that he went on treating me. Several times, in truth, he would fain have left me, remembering that he was risking no slight penalty in doctoring me, or at least in continuing his attendance. The Cardinal had me put in a secret chamber, and went off at once to the palace to beg me from the Pope.

xxi. Meanwhile Rome was in the greatest excitement ; for already the linen strips hanging from the great tower of the castle had been discovered, and every one ran to see the marvel. The castellan was overcome by one of his maddest humours ; and was determined, in defiance of all his servants, to fly down, too, from the keep ; for, said he, the only way of catching me was for himself to fly after me. Messer Ruberto Pucci, the father of Messer Pandolfo, having heard of the wonder, went to see for himself. Afterwards he repaired to the palace, where he met Cardinal Cornaro, who told him the whole story, and how I was in one of his apartments, and already under treatment. Together these two worthy men went and knelt before the Pope. Before they could utter a word, he cut in with, "I know all you want of me." Then answered Messer Ruberto Pucci, "Most Holy Father, we entreat of your mercy to give up that poor man to us, who for his great talents merits some considerate treatment, and who, besides, has proved a more than human courage and resource. We do not know for what sins your Holiness has kept him so long in prison. If they be too heinous, your Holiness is holy and wise ; and in everything and

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everywhere may your will be done. But if his offences are such as can be pardoned, we beg that you will forgive him for our pleading.” The Pope, who was somewhat confused, replied, “We have kept him in prison at the request of some of his friends, because he was too hot-headed ; but,” he added, “fully aware of his talents, and desiring to keep him near us, we had arranged to confer such benefits on him that he should have had no pretext for returning to France. I am grieved that he is so much hurt. Tell him to think of getting well ; and as soon as he is cured we shall compensate him for all his troubles.”

Then these two good men returned to me with this welcome message from the Pope. In the meantime the nobility of Rome came to visit me, both young men and old of every degree. The castellan, mad as he was, had himself carried to the Pope ; and there he began to protest that if his Holiness did not send me back to prison, it would be doing him a great wrong. “For,” he added, “Benvenuto escaped in defiance of his word of honour. Alas ! alas ! he has flown away, and he promised me he would not.” Then the Pope, laughing, said, “Go now, go ! for of a truth I will give him back to you.” But the castellan entreated, “Send the governor to him, to learn who helped him to escape ; for if it be one of my men, I will hang him by the neck to that very battlement from which Benvenuto got down.” When the castellan had gone, the Pope called for the governor, and said to him, smiling, “This is a brave man, and it’s a wonderful thing he has done ; though, when I was young, I also got down from that very place.” And here he spoke the truth ; for once he had been shut up in the castle for forging a papal brief, when he was abbreviator in the College of Parco Majori. Pope Alexander had kept him in prison for a considerable time ; and later, as his

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crime was of a shocking description, he even determined to cut off his head. But as his Holiness wanted to have the Corpus Domini over first, Farnese learnt all, sent for Pietro Chiavelluzzi with several horses, and bribed the warders of the castle with money. So that on the feast day, when the Pope was in the procession, Farnese was placed in a basket and lowered to the ground by a rope. There was no outer wall of the castle in those days ; there was only the great tower ; so that he had not such difficulty in getting off as I had. Moreover, he was rightly imprisoned, and I unjustly. He only wanted to boast to the governor that he, too, in his time had been a youth of spirit and high courage ; and did not see how he was but disclosing his own great villainy. "Go," said he, "and ask him to tell frankly who helped him. No matter who it be, it is enough for Benvenuto that I have pardoned him ; and that you can promise him freely."

cxi. And so the governor came to me. Two days before, he had been appointed Bishop of Jesi. Entering, he said, "Benvenuto, my friend, though my office is terrifying to men, I am here to set your mind at ease ; and for this I have the express order of his Holiness. He told me that he also had made a like escapade, but with good help and plenty of company ; otherwise he would have failed. I swear to you by the sacraments which I carry upon me—for only two days ago I was made a bishop—that the Pope has liberated and pardoned you, and that he grieves over your hurt. But see to getting well ; keep a cheerful mind ; and the confinement, which in very truth you endured in all innocence, will prove a lasting good. You will trample poverty under your feet, and need never think of returning to France, tormenting your life out in this part or in that. Therefore tell me frankly the whole story, and who was your helper. After that, be at ease,

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rest, and get well." So from the very beginning I told him exactly how it had all happened, giving him the minutest details, not forgetting even to speak of the water-carrier who had carried me on his back. When the governor had heard all, he said, "Truly these are prodigious things for one man to have done by himself! No other in the world could have carried the thing through." Then, seizing my hand, he said, "Be of good cheer, and comfort you; for by this hand which you now grasp, you are free; and I promise you that, if you live, you shall be happy." Then he left me. Meanwhile he had been hindering a heap of nobles and gentlemen from seeing me. They had come to pay me a visit, having said amongst themselves, "Let us go and see this miracle-worker." They now stayed on with me for a while, and some of them offered me services, and some brought me gifts.

In the meantime the governor returned to the Pope, and repeated to him my story. And all who were there expressed their wonderment. Said the Pope, "This is certainly a prodigious thing!" Then spoke Signor Pier Luigi, who happened to be present, "Most Holy Father, if you liberate him, he will do greater prodigies still, for he is by nature a deal too audacious. I will tell you another exploit of his you do not know of. This Benvenuto of yours; before he was in prison, had some words with a gentleman of the Cardinal Santa Fiore's household. The difference arose from a mere trifling remark; but Benvenuto answered so arrogantly, and with such heat, that it was as good as a challenge. The gentleman placed the matter before the Cardinal, who said that if he could put his hands on the fellow, he would soon shake the nonsense out of him. Benvenuto, hearing this, got ready a gun, with which he used to practise shooting at a farthing; and one day, when the Cardinal was looking out at his window, Ben-

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venuto, whose shop is under the Cardinal's palace, took his gun and aimed at Santa Fiore, who, however, being warned, got quickly out of the way. Then, that he might not appear to have meant any such thing, the fellow aimed at a wood-pigeon which was brooding in a hole at the top of the palace, and shot it through the head—a thing almost impossible to believe. So now let your Holiness do what you will with him. I should have failed in my duty had I kept silence about this. For the idea might even come into his head one day—since he thinks he was unjustly imprisoned—to shoot at your Holiness. His is a spirit too untamed and too sure of itself. When he killed Pompeo, he struck him twice in the throat with his dagger, though ten men were about him ; and then made off—to their disgrace : yet were they men of worth and standing."

cxiii. While these words were being spoken, the gentleman of Santa Fiore's household, with whom I had had words, was present, and he confirmed to the Pope all his son had said. The Pope, swelling with rage, said not a word. Now I shall not be behind hand in speaking up for myself justly and truly concerning the affair in question. This gentleman of Santa Fiore came to me one day, and brought me a little gold ring, which was all stained with quicksilver, saying, " Brighten up this ring for me, and make haste about it." Now I had in hand a great many important works in gold and jewels. Besides, I was ruffled at hearing myself ordered about so arrogantly by one to whom I had never spoken before, nor even seen. So I told him I had no burnisher by me just then, and advised him to take the thing elsewhere. Then, for no reason in the world, he told me I was an ass. To which I answered that he did not speak the truth ; and that on every count I was a better man than he ; but that if he roused me, I would kick him harder than any

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donkey. He went and told tales of me to the Cardinal, painting me like the very devil. Two days after this, I was shooting behind the palace at a wood-pigeon brooding in a hole in the wall very high up. I had seen a goldsmith, Giovan Francesco della Tacca, a Milanese, shooting several times at the same bird ; but he never brought it down. On this particular day the pigeon showed just its head ; for it was suspicious after being shot at so often. Now Giovan Francesco and I were rivals in shooting wild birds ; and certain friends of mine, who were in my shop at the time, called to me, saying, "Look, up there is Giovan Francesco della Tacca's pigeon, at which he has shot so often. Now see how suspicious the poor creature is ; it will hardly show its head." Raising my eyes, I answered, "That little bit of head is mark enough for me, if the bird waits till I get aim at it." The gentlemen declared that the inventor of the gun himself could not do it ; but I insisted. "Go and fetch a flask of mine host Palombo's good Greek wine," said I ; "and I wager if the bird but waits till I cover it with my wonderful Broccardo (so was my gun called), I'll hit that little bit of head it shows." Then taking aim, without any rest for my arms, I did what I had promised, and without a thought in my mind of the Cardinal or any one else. Indeed I looked on the Cardinal as a great friend of mine. Thus let the world observe, when Fortune is resolved to wreck a man's career, how various are the ways she takes !

The Pope swelled and muttered in his rage, and stayed there turning over his son's story in his mind.

cxiv. Two days after this, Cardinal Cornaro went to ask the Pope for a bishopric for one of his gentlemen, called Messer Andrea Centano. It is true the Pope had promised him a bishopric, and one was now vacant. And when the Cardinal reminded him, his Holiness said that such was the truth, and

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he was quite willing ; but that he also desired a favour, namely, that his lordship should give Benvenuto into his hands. Then the Cardinal replied, "Oh, since you have pardoned him, and given him up to me as a free man, what will the world say of your Holiness and of me ?" The Pope answered, "I want Benvenuto ; you want the bishopric. Let them say what they like." The good Cardinal still begged for the bishopric ; but, for the rest, bade his Holiness reflect, and then do whatever was in his mind and power to do. The Pope, somewhat ashamed of betraying his word, said, "I will send for Benvenuto, and, just for my own satisfaction, I will put him down there in the rooms of my secret garden, where he can do his best to get well, and no hindrance shall be put in the way of his friends coming to see him. Also I will pay his expenses till this whim passes out of my head." The Cardinal returned home, and at once sent me a message by his friend who was looking for the bishopric ; how the Pope wished to have me back again in his hands, but that I should be lodged in one of the lower chambers of the secret garden, and be free to see whomsoever I liked, just as in his house. I entreated Messer Andrea to have the goodness to beg the Cardinal not to surrender me to the Pope, but to let me manage the affair. I should have myself wrapped in my bedding and taken to a sure place outside Rome. For if he gave me up, he was sending me to certain death. They say the Cardinal, when he heard what I asked, would willingly have consented. But Messer Andrea, to whom the bishopric was a matter of much concern, made known our plan. His Holiness sent for me immediately, and had me housed, as he had said, in one of the lower rooms in his secret garden. The Cardinal warned me to eat nothing provided by the Pope, promising to supply me with food ; and adding that what he had done he had been

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driven to. I was to keep a good heart, he said ; and he would help me to regain my freedom. While matters stood thus, I had visits every day, and fine offers were made to me by many great gentlemen. Food was sent by the Pope, but I never touched it, eating only what came from the Cardinal Cornaro's table. And so I stayed like this for a space.

Now among my friends was a young Greek of five-and-twenty, a very vigorous young fellow, and the finest swordsman in Rome ; rather lacking in courage, perhaps ; but a most faithful-hearted, honest creature, and very credulous. He had heard of the Pope's saying he would make up to me for all my troubles. Now it was indeed the truth that his Holiness had said so in the beginning ; but afterwards he spoke very differently. So I took this young Greek into my confidence, and said to him, "Dearest brother, those people have the wickedest designs on me, so that now is the time to help me. Do they think that I am unaware of their intentions, that I do not know their extraordinary favours to be a mere blind ?" The good young fellow replied, "Benvenuto my friend, in Rome the rumour runs that the Pope has given you an office worth five hundred crowns. Therefore I entreat you not to let this suspicion of yours lose you such a good thing." Nevertheless I begged him, and with my arms I made a cross to strengthen my entreaty, to get me out of this place. Well I knew that it was in the power of such a Pope to do me much good ; yet I also knew for a certainty he was planning secretly to do me an ill turn, without risk to his good name. Therefore I begged my friend to act quickly, and do his best to save me from my enemies. If only he got me out of this in the way I could tell him, ever after I should consider I owed my life to him, and should spend it for him in his need. This poor young man wept and said, "O my

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dear brother, you are bent on your own ruin ; yet I cannot but do your bidding. Therefore tell me your plan, and I will do all you say, though against my own will." Thus it was arranged ; and I explained to him the whole scheme, which might very easily have been successful. But when I was expecting him to carry it out, he came to say that, for my own safety, he was going to disobey me, believing fully what he had heard from men who were in the Pope's confidence, and who, he said, knew the real state of my case. He had been my only stand-by ; and now I remained wretched and despairing. This was the day of the Corpus Domini of the year 1539.

cxv. After this discussion the whole day passed away ; and at night there came from the Pope's kitchen an abundant supply of food, as well as excellent provision from the Cardinal Cornaro's table. And some friends of mine happening to come in, I made them stay to supper. I was in bed with my leg in splints, yet I made good cheer with them, so that they stayed on. About an hour after sundown they left me ; and two of my servants settled me for the night, and then lay down in the antechamber. Now I had a hairy dog as black as a mulberry. He was of the greatest use to me when I went shooting ; and now he kept close to me all the time. That night he lay under my bed, and during the hours that followed I called my servant three times to take him out, for he was howling terribly. When the servants came, the dog threw himself on them, and would have bitten them. They were terrified, and feared he was mad, for he never stopped howling. So the night went on till the fourth hour. Just on the stroke of four, the Bargello with his band came into my room. The dog rushed out, flew at them with such fury, tearing their clothes and their hosen, and terrifying them so that they thought he was mad. But the Bargello, a man of experience, said, "Good dogs by

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instinct always divine and predict any harm threatening their masters. Here, two of you drive off the creature with sticks. You others, meanwhile, bind Benvenuto to this chair, and bring him you know where." As I have said, this happened on the night after the Corpus Domini, about the fourth hour. All muffled about with wraps, I was carried off, four of the guards walking in front, to scatter the few persons who were still about the streets. Thus they brought me to the Torre di Nona—so it is called—and put me into the condemned cell. Laying me down on a bit of a mattress, they gave me in charge to one of the warders, who all night long condoled with me on my evil fortune, saying, "Alas, poor Benvenuto! what have you done to set those people against you?" By this I was left in little doubt as to my fate, the place being what it was, and this man having warned me. I spent a portion of that night in agonised conjecture as to why it had pleased God so to punish me; and because I could think of no reason, I was much disturbed. The guard set to comforting me as well as he knew. But I entreated him, for the love of God, to be silent, and to leave me alone, so that I might the more speedily and the better possess my soul. He promised to do so. Then turning my whole heart towards God, I besought Him most devoutly to receive me into His kingdom. I had, indeed, murmured; but it was at the thought of leaving this world in such a fashion, while I was quite innocent, so far as the ordinary laws were concerned. True, I had committed homicides; but God's Vicar had called me from my own country and pardoned me, by his own authority, and in the name of the laws; and what I had done had been done in defence of that body, which His Divine Majesty had lent to me, so that I could not own that I deserved this death, having regard to the conditions under which we live in the world. It seemed to me that I was in the

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position of unlucky persons walking in the streets, when a stone falls from some great height on their head and kills them, which may be clearly assigned to the influence of the stars. Not that the stars in any way plot against us, to do us or good or ill ; but these accidents come to pass through their conjunction, to which we are subject. Yet, I reflected, I know I have free will ; and if my faith were active and devout, I am very certain that the angels of heaven would bear me out of this prison, and would bring me to a sure refuge from all my troubles. But since God thinks me unworthy of such a favour, it is clear that celestial influences work out their malignity on me. This struggle lasted for a time. Then I became calm, and ere long I fell asleep.

cxvi. When the dawn broke, the warder woke me and said, "O unlucky man, yet undeserving of your fate ! There is no more time for sleep. One has come with ill news for you." Then I answered, "The sooner I am out of this prison of the world, the happier for me, the more that I am sure my soul has found salvation, and that I die innocent. Christ, glorious and divine, makes me companion of His disciples and His friends, who like Him were wrongly put to death. I, too, unjustly am sent to my death ; and I thank God devoutly for the same. Why does he not appear who brings me my sentence ?" Then answered the warder, "He is too sorry for you, and he weeps." So I called him by his own name, which was Benedetto da Cagli, saying, "Come forward, Messer Benedetto my friend, for now I am most well disposed and resigned. I glory much more, dying thus unjustly, than if I had been deserving of such a fate. Come hither, I beg you ; and grant me a priest, that I may speak a word or two with him—although I have no need of this, for I have already made holy confession to my Lord God. Yet fain would I observe what Holy Mother Church has

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commanded us; for though she has done me this hideous wrong, I freely pardon her. So come, friend Benedetto; hasten to tell me your message, while I am still in this devout mood."

When I had said these words, the worthy man told the guard to lock the door on me in the meanwhile; for without him the business could not be done. Then he went off to the house of Signor Pier Luigi's wife, who had with her the Duchess I have already spoken of. And presenting himself to them, he said, "My most illustrious mistress, be pleased, I beg you, for the love of God, to ask the Pope to send another man to speak the sentence on Benvenuto, and carry out my office; for I renounce it, and never will I fulfil it." Then sighing, and in greatest grief of heart, he went away. The Duchess knitted her brows, as she said, "This is the fine justice administered in Rome by the Vicar of God! The Duke, my former husband, had the highest opinion of this man, for his worth and his talents. He never wished him to return to Rome, but holding him very dear, he desired to keep him near his person." Then she went off with angry mutterings on her lips. The wife of Signor Pier Luigi, who was called the Signora Jérolima, then repaired to the Pope; and throwing herself on her knees before him, in the presence of several cardinals, spoke so impressively that she brought a blush to his cheek. "For your sake," he replied, "we will let him be—though we never wished him harm." But he only said so because the cardinals had heard the appeal of this wonderful and spirited lady.

In the meantime I remained in the greatest anxiety, my heart beating violently all the while. Hardly less anxious were the men on whom the horrid duty would have fallen. But when dinner time had passed, they all went about their other business, and food was brought to me likewise. In

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my astonishment I said, "Now has truth been stronger than the malignity of the celestial influences. And I pray God that it may please Him to save me from the fury of this tempest." Then I began to eat; and just as resolutely as I had made up my mind to the worst, so now did I bravely hope for good fortune. I dined heartily; and not a soul came near me till one hour of the night, when the Bargello arrived with a good part of his men, and had me put back in the chair in which, the night before, he had brought me to this place. On the way he spoke most kindly to me, telling me to fear nothing; and ordering his men to avoid jostling my broken leg, and to take care of me as of their own eyes. So they did; and brought me to the castle whence I had escaped; and when we were at the top of the keep, they locked me into a cell opening on a little court there for a while.

cxvii. Meantime the castellan had himself brought to the place where I was; and the poor afflicted man said to me, "See, I have got you again." "Yes," said I, "but you must own that I did escape as I told you. And if I had not been sold—on the Pope's word, too—for a bishopric, by a Venetian Cardinal and a Roman Farnese, who both spat in the face of the most sacred laws, you would never have caught me again. But now, since they have set out on this evil road, do your worst. Everything in the world is the same to me." Then the poor man began to cry aloud, "Alas, alas! he does not care whether he lives or dies; and he is more audacious than when he was well. Put him down there below the garden, and never speak of him again; for he will be the death of me!"

I was then taken to a dark cell under the garden. Water covered the floor, and it was full of tarantulas and venomous worms. A wretched mattress of hemp was thrown down on the ground for me. I was given no supper that night; and there was I left

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behind four locked doors. So I remained till the nineteenth hour of the next day. When at last they brought me something to eat, I asked the warders to let me have some of my books to read. Not a word did they answer ; but they handed on my request to the poor castellan, who asked what I had said. Next morning I was given my Bible in the vulgar tongue, and another book which contained the *Chronicles of Giovanni Villani*. When I asked for certain others, I was told I should have no more, and that I had too many already.

And so in this unhappy state I continued, lying on the wretched damp mattress, which in three days' time was soaked through and through. I could barely move because of my broken leg ; and when I wished to get out of bed for my natural needs, I crawled on hands and knees with the greatest difficulty in order not to befoul the place where I slept. For an hour and a half each day a faint reflection of light entered my miserable dungeon by a tiny hole ; and only during that little time could I read. The rest of the day and night I waited patiently in the darkness ; nor were thoughts of God and of our human frailty ever far from me. I was certain that in a few brief days I should here, and in these conditions, end my unhappy life. Yet as best I could I comforted myself, thinking how much worse it would have been to have met my death by a blow of the hangman's horrid knife : whereas now I should pass away as if drugged to sleep, which made death seem much easier. Little by little I felt the flame of my life dying down, till my fine constitution accommodated itself to the purgatory. After I felt that it had become adapted and inured to circumstances, I made up my mind calmly to bear my terrible sufferings while strength enough remained.

cixviii. I began the Bible from the beginning, reading and pondering it devoutly ; and so fascinated

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was I by its study that, if I had been able, I should never have done anything else save pore over it. But as light failed me, then the burden of all my troubles came upon me, and tore so at my heart, that many a time I resolved to do away with myself in one way or another. Only, as they gave me no knife, it was not easy to find the means. Once, however, I took a great beam of wood I found lying in my cell, and poised it like a trap, intending it should fall on my head, which would certainly have crushed me to death on the spot. But when I had got the whole thing ready, and was making a movement to shake it down, just as I was about to put my hand to it, I was seized by some invisible thing, and thrown four cubits' length from the place ; and so terrified was I that I lay half dead ; and there, I stopped till the nineteenth hour, when they brought me my dinner. They must have come several times without my hearing them ; for when I became conscious, I heard Sandrino Monaldi, who had entered, saying, "O unhappy man ! See the end of such rare talent !" When these words reached me, I opened my eyes, and saw priests with their robes on, who said, "Oh, you told us he was dead !" And Bozza answered, "Dead I found him ; and so I told you." Then they raised me up, lifted the mattress which was pulpy, just like a mess of macaroni, and threw it out of the room. When they described my condition to the castellan, he ordered me another mattress. Afterwards, when I pondered what it might have been that turned me back from such a deed, I felt I had been visited by some power divine, my guardian angel.

cixix. Next night there appeared to me in a dream a wonderful being, in the shape of a beautiful youth, who reproached me, saying, "Dost thou know who lent thee that body which thou wouldest have destroyed before its time ?" I seemed to make answer

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that I recognised everything as coming from the God of Nature. Then said he, "Dost thou despise His works, seeking thus to spoil them? Let Him be thy guide, and never lose hope in His great power." And much other excellent counsel he gave me, of which I do not remember the thousandth part. So I began to reflect that this angel had, indeed, told me the truth. Casting my eyes round the prison, I saw some bits of crumbling brick, and by rubbing one piece against another, I contrived to make a little paste. Then I crawled to the door of my prison, and bit off a little splinter from the sharp edge. I waited until the light came into my cell, which was from twenty and a half to twenty-one and a half of the day. Then I began to write, as well as I could, on some blank pages of my Bible a reproof to the revolting spirits that rule my intellect, which had refused any longer to bear this life. They, on their part, replied to my body, setting forward their suffering as excuse; and then the body gave them hope of good to come. So, in dialogue form, I wrote—

The Body.

Afflicted spirits mine! Ah, lend
An ear. How cruel your hate of life!

The Spirits.

If Heaven and you contend,
Who is our champion in the strife?
Then stay us not: we seek a better life.

The Body.

Ah, go not yet, I pray!
Heaven holds before your face
Such joys as in the past you ne'er did know.

The Spirits.

Still a few hours we stay,
If the great God concede to you such grace
As brings us not a heavier load of woe.

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My vigour came back once again, now that I had thus comforted myself ; and I went on reading my Bible. My eyes had become so accustomed to the darkness that, whereas at first I could only read an hour and a half, now I read three whole hours. Marvelling greatly, I pondered the force of God's strength' in those so simple men, who believed with utmost fervour that God would grant them the desire of their hearts. I, too, looked forward to the help of God, depending on His divine strength and mercy, and likewise on my own innocence. Thus all the time these high thoughts stayed by me ; and now I talked with Him. And such delight did I begin to feel in this communion, that I did not remember any more my sufferings in the past ; but all day long I sang psalms and many other verses I had made in His praise.

One thing, however, gave me great trouble, and that was the growth of my nails ; for whenever I touched myself I made a wound, and I could not dress without their either turning inwards or outwards, and causing me much suffering. Also my teeth were decaying in my mouth. I became aware of this when the dead teeth were shoved up by the living ones, and little by little the gums were pierced, and the sharp points of the roots came through their cases. When I saw this, I drew them out one after the other, like knives from their scabbards, without pain or blood. However, I got used to these fresh troubles and annoyances. Sometimes I sang, sometimes I prayed, and sometimes I wrote with the brick paste I have mentioned. It was then I began a Capitolo in praise of my prison, telling all the accidents that had happened to me. This Capitolo shall be written down in its own place.

cxx. The good castellan sent often privately to know what I was doing. Now on the last day of July I was in very good heart, there all by myself,

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remembering the great feast that is wont to be held in Rome on the 1st of August. "In past years," I said, "I kept this pleasant feast amidst the vanities of the world. This year I shall hold it contemplating the divinity of God. Oh, how much happier am I now than then!" These words of mine were reported to the castellan, who was vexed beyond measure, and said, "O God, he thrives and triumphs in the midst of all his sufferings; while I am wretched in the midst of plenty! I die, and his is the fault. Go at once and put him in the lowest dungeon of all, where the Preacher Foiano was starved to death. Perhaps when he sees himself in such evil case, he will be less merry!"

So there came to my prison Captain Sandrino Monaldi, with about twenty of the castellan's servants. They found me on my knees, and I did not move at their entrance; for I was praying before a God-the-Father with angels around, and a Christ rising victorious, which I had drawn on the wall with a piece of charcoal I had found amongst a heap of earth in my cell. Now I had lain four months on my back on account of my broken leg, and had dreamt so often that the angels came to cure me, that by this time it had grown as strong as if it had never been broken. Well, now these men came towards me, all armed, and as much afraid as if I had been a venomous dragon. Then the Captain spoke: "You know we are here, and in our numbers, for we came in with noise enough; and yet you do not turn round to greet us." When I heard these words, my mind ran at once to the greater evil which might happen to me; but misfortune and I being old and constant friends, I said to them, "To the God Who bears me up, to the Heavenly One I have turned my soul, my contemplation, and all my vital forces. To you I turn just what belongs to you; for what is good in me you are not worthy to look on, nor can

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you touch it. But do to that which is yours whatever you may." The Captain was in a fright ; and not knowing what I might do, he cried to four of the stoutest, " Lay down all your weapons." As soon as they had done so, he said, " Now throw yourselves on him—quick—quick—and seize him ! Is he the devil that so many of us should tremble before him ? Hold him fast that he may not escape !" Then I was seized with brutal violence ; and looking for something much worse than what actually happened, I lifted my eyes to Christ, and said, " O God of Justice, on that high cross of Thine, didst Thou not pay all our debts ? Why then has my innocence to pay the debts of some unknown sinner ? Nevertheless, Thy will be done."

In the meantime they were carrying me away with a huge lighted torch ; and I felt sure they were going to throw me down the Sammalò oubliette. Such is the name of a place which has engulfed many a living man ; and they fall down, down, into a deep hole in the foundations of the castle. But this did not happen. So I thought I was exceedingly lucky when they put me in that horrid dungeon of which I have spoken, the one where Foiano died of hunger. There they left me without doing me any further hurt.

When I was alone, I began to sing a *De profundis clamavi*, a *Miserere*, and *In te Domine speravi*. And thus it was I kept that 1st of August feast with God, my heart rejoicing all the time in hope and faith. On the second day they drew me out of that hole, and brought me back again to the cell where I had drawn God's image on the wall. When I got back there, I was overcome with weeping for the sweetness of my joy. After that the castellan would have news every day of what I did and said.

Now the doctors had already given up all hope of saving his life ; and the Pope, who had heard the

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whole story, said, "Before my castellan dies, I am willing to let him get rid of Benvenuto in whatever way he likes ; for he is the cause of his death, and he shall not die unavenged." These words being reported to him by Duke Pier Luigi, the castellan cried, "So now the Pope gives me Benvenuto, and would have me take my revenge on him ? Think no more about the matter ; leave it to me." If the Pope in his heart harboured malice against me, revenge and bitterness raged in that of the castellan at that moment. Just then the invisible guardian, who had kept me from taking my own life, came to me. I could not see him, but he stood by me, lifted me up from the depths, and said in a clear voice, "Ah, me ! Benvenuto my friend, make haste. Assail God with thy wonted prayers, and cry aloud to Him !" Seized with sudden fright, I sank on my knees, and recited prayer after prayer in a loud voice, adding at the end the *Qui habitat in adjutorio*. Then I talked with God for a space. And all at once the firm, clear voice said, "Go now and rest, and have no fear."

Now this is what had happened. After the castellan had given a most brutal order for my death, all at once he withdrew it, saying, "Is he not Benvenuto whom I have defended so stoutly, and of whose innocence I am quite certain, knowing as I do all this cruelty is wrought on him unjustly ? Oh, how can God ever have pity on me and on my sins, if I do not pardon those who have done me the greatest wrongs ? Oh, why should I hurt a good innocent man, who has done me service and honour ? Go to ! instead of killing him, I will give him life and liberty ; and I shall leave it written in my testament that no one is to ask him a single farthing of the great expenses I have undergone for him, which otherwise he would have to pay." Now this came to the ears of the Pope, and he was very angry.

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cxxi. Meanwhile I continued to pray, and went on writing my Capitolo. And every night I dreamt the most gladsome and pleasant dreams imaginable. I always seemed to be in the company of that spirit, who had been invisible, but whom I now saw, and whose voice I continued to hear. I asked but one sole grace of him ; and that I begged with all my heart, that he would bring me where I could see the sun. This, I said, was the only desire I had, and if I could but see it, then I should die content. By this time all the annoyances I had to endure in my prison had become even as my friends and companions ; none of them disturbed me any more. Yet there were minions of the castellan who were looking for him to hang me from the battlement from whence I had climbed down, as I have told you ; and when they saw how their master had resolved on just the opposite, they could not bear it ; and all the time they kept inventing new terrors for me, so that I might never cease trembling, and ever feel that death was at hand. But, as I say, I had grown so accustomed to all these things, that I feared none of them ; and the one desire that stirred within me was to see the sphere of the sun in my dreams. So did I pray without ceasing ; and my heart went out to Christ, crying continually, "O true Son of God, I pray Thee by Thy birth, by Thy death upon the Cross, and Thy glorious resurrection, grant me to see the sun, if not otherwise, at least in dreams. But if Thou renderest me worthy to see it with these mortal eyes, I promise to go a pilgrimage to Thy Holy Sepulchre." This vow and these my most earnest prayers, I made to God on the 2nd day of October 1539. Next morning, which was the 3rd of October, I awoke at dawn, almost an hour before the rising of the sun ; and getting up from my wretched lair, I put on a covering, for it had begun to be cold, and then

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prayed more devoutly than ever I had done before, beseeching Christ to grant me at least such grace as should reveal to me the sin of mine for which I was undergoing this sore penance ; and since His Divine Majesty had not thought me worthy to see the sun even in my dreams, I begged Him, in the name of His great power and virtue, to make known to me the reason of my punishment.

cxxii. When I had said these words, I was taken up and carried away by that invisible power, like a wind, and brought into a place where the unknown being manifested himself visibly in human form, in the shape of a youth scarce bearded, wondrous fair of face, but austere, and no wanton. And in that place he pointed some out to me, saying, "This great company of men you see are those who from the beginning of time have been born into the world, and then have died." Whereat I asked him why he brought me here ; and he made answer, "Come with me, and soon you shall know." Now in my hand I carried a dagger, and I wore a coat of mail. He led me through the spacious place, and showed me folk in their infinite thousands, walking some this way and some the other. Still he led me on, and then stepped in front of me through a little doorway into what seemed a narrow street. I found myself disarmed, and I was in a white shirt with nothing on my head, and walking on my companion's right hand. Seeing myself like this, I was full of wonder, for I did not know the street. Lifting my eyes, I saw that the light of the sun was beating on a wall, like a house front, above my head. Then I exclaimed, "Oh friend, what must I do to rise high enough to see the very sphere of the sun ?" And he pointed out to me some great stairs upon my right hand, and said, "Go that way, and alone." So I went on by myself. I mounted the stairs backwards, and little by little became aware of the nearness of the sun. I

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hastened my steps, and went on still in this fashion, till I perceived the whole sphere of the sun. Now the force of its rays made me instinctively close my eyes. Perceiving my error, however, I opened them and looked straight at the light, and said, "O sun, my friend, whom I have so longed for ! Never again would I see aught else, though thy rays blind me." Thus I stood for a space with my eyes firmly fixed on it, till suddenly the full force of the great rays were cast upon the left of the orb, which then remained clear and rayless ; and with infinite gladness did I behold it, for it seemed to me a most marvellous thing that the rays were thus removed. I stayed to ponder on the Grace Divine I had received that morning from God ; and I cried aloud, "O wonderful power of Thine ! O glorious virtue ! How much more grace Thou grantest me than e'er I looked for !" This rayless sun appeared to me, not more nor less than a bath of purest liquid gold. While I was considering this marvel, I saw something grow from the middle of the sphere ; and gradually the growth took shape, and in an instant it was a Christ upon the Cross, made of the stuff of the sun itself. Such grace was in His benign aspect, that the mind of man could not imagine a myriad part of it. And while I was contemplating the wonder, I cried aloud "A miracle ! A miracle ! O God ! O clemency of Thine, O Virtue Infinite ! What wonders hast Thou granted me to see this day !" While I stood in this ecstasy, Christ moved towards that part whither had travelled the rays ; and the centre of the sun swelled out anew ; and as it grew, it took shape in a Madonna of marvellous beauty. She was sitting on a high throne with her Son in her arms, in sweetest attitude, and with a smile upon her face. On this side and on that was an angel of such marvellous beauty that imagination does not reach thereto. I saw also within the sun, on the right, a figure clad

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like a priest. He kept his back to me, and turned his face towards the Madonna and the Christ. All these things I saw true, clear, and living ; and all the time I kept crying aloud my praise to the glory of God. This wonderful thing had been before my eyes but a few minutes when it vanished ; and I was thrust back to my wretched lair. Then did I exclaim, “ By the virtue of God I have been deemed worthy to see His glory, which may be no mortal eye hath ever seen before. Wherefore by this I know that I am free and happy and protected by God’s grace ; and you villains shall villains still remain, unhappy and under the ban of the Almighty. Hearken to what I say now ; for I have assurance that at four of the night following on All Saints’ Day, which was the day I came into the world, (namely, the first of November of the year 1500), you will be compelled to take me out of this dark dungeon ; nor will you be able to help yourselves. For I have seen it with mine own eyes writ plain upon the throne of God. That priest with his face towards God, and his back to me, was the Blessed Peter, who was pleading my cause ; for he was shamed that in his house Christians should suffer such cruel wrongs. So tell whoever you will, that no one has the power to do me further hurt ; and tell the lord who keeps me here that, if he will send me either wax or paper, by which I can show forth the Glory of God revealed unto me, then of a surety I shall make clear to him what mayhap he now holds in doubt.”

cxxiii. Although the doctors had no hope of saving the castellan’s life, yet he remained sane in mind ; for those mad humours which were wont to afflict him every year, were utterly departed. His one thought was now the saving of his soul ; and his conscience gnawed him, for it was much on his mind that I had suffered, and was still suffering, a very great wrong. He let the Pope know the great things

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of which I spoke ; but his Holiness sent back the answer of one who believes neither in God nor in anything else : that I was mad, and that he should give all his mind to the care of his own health. When the castellan heard the Pope's reply, he sent me words of comfort, and supplied me with writing materials, with wax also, and some little wooden modelling tools, and sent kind messages besides, which were delivered by one of his servants who was a good friend of mine ; just the opposite, in fact, of that other band of rascals, who would have liked to see me dead. With the paper and the wax I began to employ myself, and while I worked, I wrote this sonnet to the castellan—

My lord, if I to you the truth could show
 Of light eternal unto me reveal'd,
 In this low life, such faith to me you'd yield
 As scarce on a high emperor you'd bestow.

If the great Pastor of the Church could know
 Mine eyes have seen God's glory without shield,
 Glory from every other soul conceal'd
 Till it has left this realm of bitter woe,

The gates of holy Justice you would see
 Roll back, and impious Fury sudden fall
 Helpless and bound, protesting to the skies.

Had I but light—but light ! Ah me !
 To carve my vision on the heavenly wall,
 Then should I all my other griefs despise.

cxxiv. When next day, the castellan's servant who was fond of me, brought me my food, I gave him this sonnet written out ; and, without telling those other evil-minded servants who had an ill will to me, he handed it to his master. The castellan would willingly have let me go free, for he had the notion that the wrong done to me was the chief cause of his dying. Taking the sonnet, he read it more than

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once, and said, "These are neither the words nor the conceits of a madman, but of a good honest man ;" and at once he ordered one of his secretaries to take it to the Pope, to give it into his own hands, and beg him to let me go free. While the secretary was carrying the sonnet to the Pope, the castellan sent me lights both for the day and for the night, and every comfort which could be looked for in that place. So I began to recover from my weakness, which had become very serious. The Pope read the sonnet several times. Then he sent word to the castellan that ere long he would do what would please him. And, indeed, his Holiness would have willingly let me go then ; but Signor Pier Luigi, his son, almost in defiance of his father, kept me there by force.

The death of the castellan was drawing near. While I was designing and sculpting the marvellous miracle I have related, on the morning of All Saints' Day, he sent Piero Ugolini his nephew to show me some jewels. As soon as I saw them, I cried out : " This is the countersign of my deliverance." Whereupon the young man, who was somewhat slow-witted, said, " Don't be counting on that, Benvenuto." Then I answered, " Take away your jewels ; for I am so ill-treated here that I have not light enough in this black cell ; and without light it is impossible to discern the quality of the stones. But as to getting out of prison, before this day is done, you will come to take me out of it. And this is fated ; you cannot help yourself." Then he went away, and the key was turned on me again. But after he had been gone more than two hours by the clock, he came back for me without an armed guard, with only two lads who helped me to walk. Thus I was brought into the spacious apartment which I had in the beginning (that is in 1538), and was given all the comforts I could wish for.

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cxxv. A few days after, the castellan — who thought I was out of prison and free—pressed hard by his mortal malady, passed from this present life. His place was taken by his brother Messer Antonio Ugolini, who had given the castellan to understand that he had let me go. This Messer Antonio, so far as I understood, had the authority of the Pope to let me remain in this spacious prison till he should tell him what was to be done with me. Now Messer Durante of Brescia, whom I have already spoken of, arranged with the soldier, who had been an apothecary in Prato, to give me some liquid poison in my food. It was not meant to work suddenly, but to take effect in four or five months. But in the end they made up their minds to mix diamond dust with my meat. In itself it is not poisonous at all ; but being extraordinarily hard, its sharply pointed angles do not become rounded when it is reduced to powder, as would be the case with other stones. Only the diamond keeps its sharp edge, so that, if it enters the stomach along with food, during the process of digestion it sticks to the coats of the stomach and the bowels, and as the new food comes ever pushing forward, it is not long before it pierces them, and death is the result ; whereas no other kind of stone or glass sticks to the organs, but goes on its way with the food. So now this Messer Durante gave a diamond of small value to one of the warders ; and it is said that a certain Lione, a goldsmith of Arezzo, and a great enemy of mine, was given the pounding of it. Now Lione was very poor, and the diamond might have been worth some dozens of crowns. Well, he gave the warden to understand that the dust he returned to him was really this diamond pounded and ready to be administered to me. So that morning—it happened to be a Friday—they put it into all my victuals. I was given it in salad, in sauce, and in soup. I set to with a hearty appetite, for the night

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before I had fasted, and this was a feast day. It is quite true that I felt my teeth crunching the food, but the thought of such a piece of rascality never entered my head. When I had finished dinner, a little salad was left on the plate, and my eyes happened to fall on some very fine splinters among the remains. I took them at once to the light of the window ; and while I was looking at them, I remembered that my food had crunched under my teeth that morning more than usual. After examining them well, I came to the conclusion that, as far as my eyes could judge, they were particles of diamond dust. I gave myself up at once for dead. Sorrow and devotion mingled in my heart as I hastened to my prayers. Thus facing my certain death, for a whole hour I entreated God in prayer, and thanked Him for a death so mild. Since my stars had thus ruled my fate, I thought I was fortunate to get out of life by this easy road. I felt a deep contentment, and blessed the world and the time I had lived in it. Now I was returning to a better land, by the grace of God, which I felt quite sure I had won.

While these thoughts were running in my mind, I held in my hand some tiny grains of the supposed diamond ; for, indeed, I thought it to be such. But hope never dies, and even now a faint vain glimmer of it led me on. So I took a small knife and some of the grains, and placed them on one of my prison bars. Then with great care I pressed the point of the knife heavily on the grains, and felt them crumbling. Looking closer, I knew it was so. At once I wrapped myself about with new hope, and said, "This won't do me much harm, Messer Durante ; it's only a soft and worthless and quite harmless stone." True, I had made up my mind to be calm and to die in peace ; but I now changed my mind. First of all, however, I thanked God, and blessed

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poverty, which, though many times it brings about men's death, was now the real cause of my escape. For, as I have told you, Messer Durante, my enemy, or whoever it was, gave a diamond worth more than a hundred crowns to be pounded. But Lione, tempted by his poverty, kept it himself, and ground for me a citron-coloured beryl worth two carlins, thinking, probably, that any stone would have the same effect as a diamond.

cxxvi. About this time the Bishop of Pavia, brother of the Count of San Secondo, who was called Monsignor de' Rossi of Parma, was imprisoned in the castle on account of some disputes that had taken place at Pavia. Now, as he was a great friend of mine, I put my head out of a hole in my prison, and called to him loud, telling him the rascals had given me a pounded diamond, meaning to kill me ; and I sent him by one of his servants some of the dust which was left. But I did not tell him that I knew it was not diamond dust. I said that they had certainly poisoned me because my good friend the castellan was dead. So for the little time I still had to live, I begged him to give me one of his loaves every day ; for I did not wish to eat anything more that came from them. He promised to send me food from his table.

Messer Antonio, who was certainly not aware of the plot, made a great noise about it, and requested to be shown the powdered stone, thinking, like the rest, that it was really diamond dust. But afterwards, fearing that the Pope was the instigator of the plot, he let it pass as a mere trifle, when he had thought over the matter. After that I ate the food sent me by the Bishop ; and continued writing my Capitolo on the prison, setting down each day, point by point, every new thing that happened to me. Now Messer Antonio sent me food as well, by the hand of Giovanni, the Prato apothecary I have

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mentioned, who was here as a soldier. This man had a great ill-will to me ; indeed it was he who brought me the powdered diamond. So I told him I would eat nothing he brought me, unless he first ate some himself. He answered me that it was for Popes to have their food tasted. Whereupon I answered that, as noblemen are obliged to do this service to the Pope, he, a soldier, an apothecary, a mean Prato fellow, must not refuse to do it for a Florentine like me. He threw insolent words at me in reply ; but I was a match for him in that. Messer Antonio, who was somewhat ashamed of the affair, especially as he intended making me pay the expenses of my keep—which the poor dead castellan had let me off—employed another servant to bring my victuals. This man, who was friendly to me, willingly tasted my food without arguing the point. He told me how the Pope was worried every day by Monsignor de Montluc, who was continually asking for me for his King ; but that the Pope had little fancy to give me up ; and that the Cardinal Farnese, formerly my patron and friend, had been heard to say that I need not count on getting out of prison yet a while. Thereupon I said I'd be out in despite of them all. Then the worthy fellow begged me to be quiet, and not let any one hear me saying such a thing, for it would be against me. He counselled me, since I had put my faith in God, to await His mercy in quietness. I answered him that the power of God had no need to tremble before the malice of the unjust.

cxxvii. A few days passed, and the Cardinal of Ferrara appeared in Rome. He went to do reverence to the Pope, who kept him so long that supper time came on ; for his Holiness, who was a very able man, wished to talk over French affairs at leisure with him. Now at table people say things which otherwise they would leave unsaid. So was it now.

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The great King Francis was always most liberal in his dealings ; and the Cardinal, who knew his character well, made promises on his behalf far beyond the Pope's expectations. So his Holiness was in high spirits about this. Besides, once a week, it was his habit to indulge in a great debauch, after which he vomited. So when the Cardinal saw the Pope was in a humour to confer favours, he asked for me in the name of his master with great insistence, bringing proof that King Francis had a strong feeling in the matter. Then the Pope, knowing the moment for vomiting was at hand—and besides his deep potations were also having their effect—said to the Cardinal with a great laugh, “ You shall take him home with you this instant ” ; and having given express orders to this effect, he rose from the table. So the Cardinal sent for me at once, before Signor Pier Luigi should hear of it ; for he certainly would have put a stop to my coming out. The Pope's messenger arrived along with two great noblemen belonging to the suite of the Cardinal of Ferrara ; and at past four of the night, they took me out of prison and brought me to their patron, who gave me the warmest welcome. There I was well lodged, and I stayed in comfort.

Messer Antonio, the castellan's brother and substitute, forced me to pay all my expenses, and also the gratuities which the police officials and such like persons are used to expect in cases like mine ; nor would he pay any heed to the directions left by the castellan on this head. The business cost me many scores of crowns ; but the Cardinal said I must be prudent if I valued my life ; and he told me that if he had not dug me out of prison that very evening, I should not have been released. Already he had heard that the Pope much lamented having let me go.

cxxviii. I must now turn back a step to tell of

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certain circumstances which will be found in my Capitolo. While I was staying those few days in the apartments of the Cardinal, and afterwards in the private garden of the Pope, among other dear friends who came to see me was a cashier of Messer Bindo Altoviti, Bernardo Galluzzi by name. Now I had entrusted several hundreds of crowns to him ; so he came to me in the Pope's garden and wanted to return the whole sum. But I told him that I did not know any better friend to whom to entrust my property, nor any safer place. Yet he appeared to be unwilling to the last degree ; and I had almost to use force to make him keep it. Now when I was out of the castle for good, I found that this poor young Bernardo Galluzzi was ruined ; and so I lost my money. While I was in prison I dreamt a terrible dream, in which some one seemed to write words of the utmost meaning on my forehead with a pen ; and the writer commanded me thrice to keep silence, and to tell the matter to no man. When I awoke I found my forehead marked. In my Capitolo on the prison I have told a great many things of the kind. For instance, I heard (though I did not know the meaning of the message) all that afterwards happened to Signor Pier Luigi, and this so clearly, and so precisely, that, for myself, I believe it was, indeed, an angel from Heaven who told it to me. Nor must I leave out one thing, the greatest surely that ever happened to any man ; for I would justify the divinity of God and of His secrets, Who deemed me worthy. From the time when I saw the great vision till now, there has remained a splendour (Oh wondrous thing !) about my head ; and this is plain to all to whom I have thought well to point it out—but these are very few. It is visible above my shadow in the morning, at sunrise, and for two hours after, and still clearer when there is dew upon the grass. In the evening, too, at sunset, it can be seen. I became aware of it

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first in France, when I was in Paris ; for the air in those parts is much freer from haze than in Italy, where we have many more mists. Nevertheless, in every circumstance I can see it, and show it to others, too, though less clearly than when I was in France.

I will now set down my Capitolo made in prison, and in praise of the prison ; after which I will go on to relate the good and evil which I have experienced from time to time ; and I hope one day to add things which have still to happen in my life.

THIS CAPITOLO I INSCRIBE TO LUCA MARTINI, AND IT IS TO HIM I SPEAK THEREIN.

Whoe'er would know the measure of God's strength,
And how far man can borrow from that source,
He must in prison lie, I firmly hold,
Harrow'd by thinking of his kindred dear,
Wearied and sick with his own body's pain ;
And far must be his exile from his home.
Now if you fain would prove yourself of worth,
Be dragg'd to prison guiltless ; and there lie
Month after month, while no man lends you aid.
And let them rob you of your little all,
While you face death and outrage every day,
Hopeless of any bettering of your fate.
Be hurl'd perforce upon a desperate deed—
Break prison—leap from the high castle wall.
Be then led back to a more hideous cell.
Listen, my Luca ; now I tell the best :
Your leg is broken ; you've been trick'd ;
You shiver in the damp without a cloak.
No kindly word ; but an there be ill news,
The warder brings it with your meat. (The boor
Not long ago in Prato mix'd his drugs).
But fame's not yours without a further test.
The stool's your only chair ; there may you sit
And waste your quick invention in this void.

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The warder has his rules. No word of yours
He hears; will give you naught; scarce dares the door
To ope enough to let his body through.
'Tis fine diversion! Paper, pens, and ink,
And tools and fire you'll ask in vain,
Although a whole life's thoughts seek outlet free.
Ah, pity 'tis, my words so little tell!
Count as an hundred every ill I've named;
And each I could discourse on with good cause.
But to return to my first plan, and sing
What praises to the prison house are due—
Ah, here an angel's tongue doth scarce suffice!
No honest men are here, save those confin'd
By tyrant rulers or their creatures vile,
Malign'd by envy, hate, and curséd spite.
To tell the truth as I discern it now—
Here God is known, and every wretch doth cry
Aloud to Him to ease the pains of Hell.
Whate'er ill fame he's gotten in the world,
Let a man lie in prison two sad years,
He'll come out holy, wise, belov'd by all.
Here soul and flesh and garments are refin'd;
Here is the grossest sight etherealised,
Till mortal man can see the thrones of Heaven.
Listen, a wonder now I tell to you—
One day it came into my head to write;
But I had to invent a strange device.
I walk about my cell with puzzled mien;
Then turning towards the door see there a slit.
I bite a splinter off—and there's my pen.
By luck, a piece of brick lies on the floor.
A portion of it, ground to powder fine
And mixed with water, makes my ink.
Then, then, the fire of Poesy divine
Enters my frame—by the same way, methinks,
Whence bread goes out. What other way was there?
But to return to my first fantasy—
'Tis certain truth that ere he knows the good,
A man must learn the ill ordain'd for him.
Prison's the home and school of every art.

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Would you fain know the leech's craft ?
Your very life-blood here you'll sweat away.
There is about it a strong natural power
To lend your speech audacious eloquence,
Laden with thoughts sublime for good and ill.
Happy the man who in a gloomy cell
Doth linger long ! When he at last comes out,
Fine can he talk of war, of truce, of peace.
And all things then must needs go well with him.
Ripe in the prison has his talent grown ;
Thenceforth no trifler, feather-brained, is he,
It may be said, Thou hast those years the less :
'Tis not in dungeons thou shalt learn the way
To make thee a full man in mind and soul.
For me, I'll praise it heartily, and yet
Protest : the law that prisons innocence
Should not allow the guilty man go free.
Who hath the poor and lowly in his power
Should learn his business in the prison school.
There are the lessons of good ruling taught.
Reason would shape his acts for evermore,
And in the path of justice he'd walk straight,
Nor would he breed confusion and dispeace.
And while I have been lodging here, I've seen
A crew of friars, priests, and men-at-arms ;
But plenteous lack of those deserving jail.
Oh, the sore grief to see the prison door
Open for one of them, keep shut for you !
Then you lament that ever you were born.
I say no more. I am become fine gold
That may not spend itself too recklessly,
But must be sav'd and shap'd to perfect work.
And now another thing has cross'd my mind
That I've not told you, Luca mine,—The book
I wrote this in, one of our kindred lent.
There in the margins I set down the tale
Of the long pain that has my body maim'd ;—
Too slow therefor, my brick-dust ink did run.
Only to make an O, three times I dipp'd
The splinter. Say, can they be vex'd more,
The wretched spirits chain'd in Hell below ?

THE LIFE OF BENVENUTO CELLINI

Before me have the guiltless been condemn'd ;
Therefore I stop my plaint, and sing once more
The cell where grief gnaws at my heart and brain.
I sing its praises louder than the rest ;
And let the untried learn from me, who've prov'd
That prison is the very school of worth.
Yet would He come, of Whom of late I've read,
To say, as once He said beside the pool,
“Rise, Benvenuto, take thy cloak and go !”
Salve reginas, credos I would sing,
And *pater noster*. Every day the poor,
The blind, the lame, should be my pensioners.
How often have the lilies blanch'd my cheek
To death-like hue ! They bar to me the sight
Of Florence and of France for evermore.
Should e'er I find upon the hospital wall
The Annunciation limn'd, then must I fly,
Lest Gabriel's lily rouse the brute in me.
I do not speak of her, holy and wise,
Nor of her lilies glorious and pure,
Shining to light our earth and Heaven above.
But wheresoe'er I turn, there meet my eyes
Those with the hook-like petals. Much I fear
There are too many for the common health.
Crowds of companions have I in my woe,
Spirits born free, high-hearted, and divine,
Yet from their birth the slaves of this device.
I saw these deathly arms like thunderbolt
Fall swift from Heaven among a people vain ;
Then in the wall a great new light did shine.
Broken the castle bell must be before
I am releas'd ; and this I know from Him
Who all things doth make plain in Heaven and
earth.
And then a dark bier I beheld bestrewn
With shattered lilies ; all the signs of woe
Were there, and stricken folk that lay upon their
beds.
And her I saw who wounds and frets the souls ;
Terror she struck, now here, now there, and said,
“See me deal death to such as work thee harm.”

THE LIFE OF BENVENUTO CELLINI

Then 'twas the angel on my forehead wrote
With Peter's pen those words that thrice
He bade me secret keep in mine own heart.
And him who guides the chariot of the sun,
Clothed in its glory, standing 'mid his court,
I saw as mortal eyes ne'er saw before.

Then chirped a solitary sparrow loud
Upon the keep ; and I took heart and cried,
"Life he foretells to me—and to you death."

The story of my woes I sang and wrote,
Asking of God His pardon and His aid,
For now in death my eyes seemed fading fast.

Was never lion, tiger, wolf, or bear
Had such a thirst of human blood as he ;
Nor ever viper had such venomous sting.

Merciless captain of a robber band !
Where all were bad, the greatest rascal he !
But hush ! I may not speak his name aloud.

Have you seen greedy bailiffs fall upon
A poor man's house, his chattels to distrain,
And hurl the holy pictures from the walls ?

So on the first of August did they come
To drag me to a yet more noisome tomb.
Wait, for November all your spite defies !

A trumpet sounded in my ears, and I
Declared to them the truth that was reveal'd,
Nought recking save my grievous pain to ease.

Then, desperate to attain their end, they took
A diamond from its setting, pounded it,
And mixed it with my food that I might die.

I forced the low-bred villain who did bring
My meat, to taste it first, then said,
"Not this my enemy Durante meant."

But first I rais'd my thoughts to God on high,
Asking His pardon for my every sin,
And, weeping, "Miserere !" cried to Him.

Then, somewhat quieted my pain, my soul
I gave into God's keeping, willingly
Content to seek a better land, another state.

I saw an angel coming down from Heaven,
Bearing a glorious palm ; with joyful face,

THE LIFE OF BENVENUTO CELLINI

“Thou’lt bear thy body’s burden yet awhile,”
He said ; “for God shall scatter every foe
Of thine, waging with them a bitter war.
But thou, happy and free, art bless’d by Him,
Father in Heaven above, and Earth beneath.”

END OF BOOK I.

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